

A Spatial Plane of Immanence: American Cinema in Late Capitalism

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A Spatial Plane of Immanence: American Cinema in Late Capitalism

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Abstract

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A Spatial Plane of Immanence: American Cinema in Late Capitalism

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This thesis articulates the distinct ways in which American cinema in late capitalism figures a plane of immanence in which space governs movement and dominates time. In doing so, my thesis implies a cinematic regime that differs from Gilles Deleuze's two cinematic regimes of the movement-image and time-image. However, this body of work strives to be more than a simple extrapolation off of Deleuze's well-known cinematic periods. Throughout this project I consciously venture away from the Deleuzian philosophy by diving into the distinct modes of production that constitute late capitalism, and delineating the ways in which this contemporary phase of globalization restructures uneven development into sectoral uneven development, a phenomenon that changes the ways in which bodies experience space and time on the plane of immanence. Thus my methodology throughout this thesis evolves and opens up a gap between Deleuze's vitalism and historical materialism. In the final chapter I attempt to close this gap by inserting Henri Lefebvre's spatial trialectic onto the plane of immanence. The contradictions between time and space that Lefebvre exposes with his spatial trialectic are inherent to the spatial plane of immanence of American cinema in late capitalism.

Dedication

To Heidi

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Introduction

This thesis engages with and reviews a certain body of literature that is concerned with space. This mysterious entity is both the primary issue under consideration in my analysis of the ways in which American cinema in late capitalism figures a new plane of immanence in which space comes to life, and it is the common concept that persists throughout my evolving methodology. My methodology grows throughout this body of work, as I consciously attempt to open up new lines of thought throughout each of the three chapters and bring in new critical perspectives and voices that support and develop my argument of a spatial rupture in the cinema. The first chapter immerses itself in Gilles Deleuze's unique understanding of the cinema as a plane of bodies and affects that grows and changes the ways in which it figures time, space, and movement across its two cinematic regimes of the movement-image and time-image. Articulating the ways in which these pre and post World War II cinematic periods respectively figure space allows me to begin delineating the distinguishing spatial qualities of American cinema in late capitalism. In the second chapter I turn directly towards the more straightforward literature of historical (geographical) materialism by looking at theorists such as Fredric Jameson, Ernest Mandel, and Edward Soja. My primary concern here is to examine the ways in which changes in modes of production reshape uneven development in our contemporary era of late capitalism. Overall, this allows me to venture away from the slippery Deleuzian literature and investigate more concrete historical evidence of a spatial rupture in the world. In the final chapter I bring Henri Lefebvre and his spatial trialectic into the fold. I use Lefebvre's, as Soja says, "objective idealism" to bridge the

gap between these two pillars of Deleuzian vitalism and Marxist historical materialism (PG 47).¹ Inserting Lefebvre's spatial trialectic onto the plane of immanence of American cinema in late capitalism is ultimately what my methodology builds up to.

Some terms and concepts need to be defined at the outset that will continuously reappear, be restated, more fully worked out, and redefined throughout the three chapters:

1.) Plane of Immanence – The plane of immanence is one of the hallmarks of Deleuzian philosophy. It refers to an understanding of the world as that which is constituted by bodies existing as fluctuating and open centers of energy that are constantly changing through affective encounters with other fluctuating bodies (Deleuze, *Spinoza* 127-128). This is an understanding of the world where affects force bodies into a perpetual state of becoming. The plane of immanence plays a vital role in my own methodology of articulating the ways in which space influences bodies and affects in American cinema of late capitalism

2.) Affect – My use affect in this thesis is very exact and literal, as it comes directly from Deleuze's definition of the concept in *Cinema I*: "It is this combination of a reflecting, immobile unity and of intensive expressive movements which constitutes the affect" (87). Throughout the thesis I rely heavily on this definition of affect by articulating and understanding the full affection-image as that which contains two poles – reflection and intensity.

¹ In chapter two of Soja's *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* he states, "In his own elaboration of the Hegel-Marx relation, Lefebvre sought to retain a strand of 'objective idealism' within the materialist dialectic, to encourage attention to contradictions in thought and consciousness as well as to the material bases of contradictions in concrete reality and history" (47).

3.) Hodological Spaces – Hodological spaces, or hodological connections, derive from Deleuze's cinema books and he uses this concept to describe the kinds of spaces that bodies exist in and move through on the plane of immanence of the movement-image regime. Hodological spaces are determined and homogeneous spaces that resemble Euclidean qualities because they are made up of fixed dimensions and coordinates that outline the peripheries of the space, and sound inter-connective structures within the space that logically connect each of its different facets (Deleuze, *C2* 128). When the plane of immanence consists of hodological spaces bodies have little to no difficulty moving through space. The loss of hodological connections in American cinema of late capitalism is one of the most important means by which the role of space changes in this contemporary era of cinema.

4.) Any-Space-Whatever – The concept of the any-space-whatever comes from Pascal Augé, and Deleuze uses this understanding of space in order to describe the quality of space in the time-image regime. The any-space-whatever is a broken spatiality, a world constituted by heterogeneity and fragmentation. Here there is no actual-physical connectivity between different facets and kinds of space (Deleuze, *C1* 109). In other words, instead of different facets of space reinforcing and associating with each other, we now have difference coexisting with difference. The spatiality of American cinema of late capitalism differs from the any-space-whatever in attaining a connective structure.

5.) Sensory-Motor-Situations – Sensory-motor-situations is a Deleuzian concept that refers to the cohesive and linear connections between the different attributes of the

movement-image regime. More specifically, this refers to both the ways in which montage sequentially connects different frames and sets to each other, and to the ways in which a body's perceptions, affections, and actions are connected in a sequential manner so as to foster movement, and celebrate situations of action (Deleuze, *C2* xi). In American cinema of late capitalism this healthy state of becoming becomes compressed and suffocated into a much more violent state of becoming.

6.) Optical-Sound-Situations – Optical-sound-situations is the concept that Deleuze uses to articulate a more disconnected and passive state of becoming on the plane of immanence of the time-image (*C2* 2). Here, the different sets and attributes of a film are no longer cohesive, as montage and continuity disappears and becomes replaced by “irrational” cutting (Deleuze, *C2* xi). Along with this, the body's perceptions, affections, and actions become separated from one another, and in doing so the body now loses the ability to react to situations. As connectivity resurfaces in American cinema of late capitalism so does the body's ability to react, albeit in an unhealthy manner.

7.) Sectoral Uneven Development – My definition of sectoral uneven development is drawn heavily from Mandel and Soja's delineations of the ways in which capitalism creates geographical regions of development and geographical regions of underdevelopment. *Sectoral* uneven development is a more compressed phase of uneven development because it creates juxtapositions of developed and underdeveloped sectors within a single, homogeneous region (Mandel 103). This is the

shape uneven development takes in late capitalism, and as it does so it creates a more compressed and schizophrenic plane of immanence.

8.) Schizophrenia – My use of schizophrenia derives from Jameson's definition of schizophrenia as a break in the cognitive link between signifier and signified that thenceforward disrupts subjective time and creates an inability to sequentially link one's own past, present, and future (*Postmodernism* 26-27). The compressed spatiality of sectoral uneven development fosters a schizophrenic state of becoming.

9.) The Spatial Trialectic – The spatial trialectic is Lefebvre's conceptual apparatus that divides social space into three layers. The first layer refers to the physical layout of space (Spatial practice/perceived space). The second layer refers to the use and control of space (Representations of space/conceived space). And the third layer refers to passively experiencing and living in space (Representational space/lived space) (Lefebvre 38-39). The culmination of and interactions between these three spatial layers unveils the contemporary contradictions of capitalism, and in doing so they also unveil the most salient contradictions of the cinematic plane of immanence of American cinema in late capitalism.

My initial critical observation for this project was that in American cinema of late capitalism bodies move differently than in both Deleuze's cinematic regimes of the movement-image and time-image. It is a more frantic, intense, and chaotic movement. The kind of movement that suggests that the lived body's relationship to the space in which it inhabits has changed significantly. By articulating the specific ways in which cinema figures this new relationship between bodies, affects, and space, and delineating

the historical determinates for this shift, I attempt to show that American cinema in late capitalism figures a plane of immanence in which space dominates bodies and affects by obstructing movement and pulverizing time; a spatial plane of immanence.

1. Venturing Beyond Movement and Time and into Intense-Searching Situations

1.1 The Zapruder Film and an Ominous Spatiality

The thirty-second, single shot film of President Kennedy's assassination falls outside the realms of Gilles Deleuze's two cinematic regimes of the movement-image and time-image. I will begin my analysis of this distinct film by making note of Pier Paolo Pasolini's essay, "Observations of the Sequence Shot," on the short film. I bring this up because of the importance of Pasolini to Deleuze's own theories on the cinema. For Deleuze, Pasolini's free indirect discourse plays a vital role in his own interpretation of the perception-image and the time-image regime.² My interest in Pasolini lies, however, outside of the realm of free indirect discourse. In fact, I'm interested in the ways in which Pasolini's insights on the Zapruder film (Harris) imply a cinema beyond the regime of the time-image. If nothing else, I hope this connection between Deleuze's use of Pasolini and my own provides some credibility as I begin to venture away from Deleuze's two cinematic regimes

Pasolini's interest in the Zapruder film concerns the contradictory relationship the film exposes between the ability to capture death, and inability to figure death through an absence of montage. For Pasolini, montage is equivalent to death in that both phenomena establish finality. Montage establishes an ending of a shot and thus makes it a complete thing, as death closes one's life and creates for it a beginning and an end. Thus what is interesting about the Zapruder film is that it records the murder of a human being without using montage and therefore it figures incomplete death: "Until such living syntagmas

² The essay "The 'Cinema of Poetry'" is where Pasolini works out his theory of free indirect discourse as applied to the cinema.

have been placed in a relationship among themselves, both the language of Kennedy's last action and the language of the assassins are maimed, incomplete languages, practically incomprehensible" (Pasolini 235).

The notion of incomplete death presents us with something like a temporal rupture that may be useful for us to start moving away from Deleuze and his infatuation with time. In fact, I believe that the salient feature of the Zapruder film is its complete disinterest in time, a phenomenon that reveals itself in more ways than simply avoiding montage. The first half of the Zapruder film lives through the same qualities of any other standard movement-image film by highlighting the action-image. The short film opens with the bodies of cars, motorcycles, and humans sliding effortlessly through the determined space of the Dallas motorway. Then an external force, the bullet that strikes Kennedy, combats this initial action and forever changes the qualities of movements of the bodies. Once the bullet hits Kennedy the image experiences a rupture, as it shifts from one of bodies acting in and through space, to one of bodies reacting against space. This is, in other words, a rift in the ways in which the film figures time, space, and movement.

The encounter between these combating bodies, the bodies of Kennedy, his wife, the moving vehicles, and, on the other hand, the bullet, creates the temporal realm of affect. Deleuze's two cinematic regimes differ from one another in the ways in which they figure this image of time, the affection-image, an image of the two poles of affect in-itself: Reflection and intensity. Deleuze defines this interval of time in stating, "It is this combination of a reflecting, immobile unity and of intensive expressive movements which constitutes the affect" (*CI* 87). The time-image regime is dominated by the

affection-image through the any-space-whatever, as in this postwar cinematic regime time stunts movement and fragments space. The movement-image regime pushes the affection-image to a peripheral image of a close-up of the face because this prewar cinematic regime prioritizes the action-image. This is, in other words, a cinematic regime in which movement governs time and space. The Zapruder film gives us a new restructuration of time, space, and movement by fracturing the temporal realm of the affection-image into an image of pure intensity, intensity without reflection. When the external bullet strikes the body of Kennedy and throws his head back against his own will, the film does not shift into a close-up of a reflective face, as a standard movement-image film would do. Instead, it remains entirely within the realm of the actual and determined spaces, shot through the combination of a long-shot and long-take. Instead of an image of a close-up of Mrs. Kennedy's face absorbing the situation and contemplating all of the potential reactions to her husband's mutilation, we have an image of Mrs. Kennedy's body frantically scrambling out of a moving car. This is an image of pure intensity, an image of space dominating movement and time.

This new figuration of bodies and affects is, in other words, a figuration of a new cinematic plane of immanence, a plane of immanence that differs from the movement-image regime's plane of immanence and the time-image regime's plane of immanence. This is a plane of immanence in which space takes control of movement and dominates time, and this prioritization of space is what marks the American cinema of late capitalism as a distinct regime of cinema. This is a cinema that, for the first time, works through a spatial plane of immanence.

1.2 What is the Plane of Immanence?

Besides Henri-Louis Bergson, the philosopher whom Deleuze is most indebted to in forming his own theories on the cinema may be Benedict De Spinoza. In both Deleuze's book on Spinoza and his own books on the cinema he relies on similar conceptual tools to conceive of the world as a *plane of immanence*. With regards to his work on the cinema, Deleuze first uses this concept of the plane of immanence in chapter four of *Cinema 1* to argue that the ways in which the cinema's constituent attributes interact with one another goes against traditional phenomenology by avoiding a centered figure of natural perception. Natural perception demands a fixed subject that simultaneously opposes and interacts with an external object. To use Deleuze's words, this is an understanding of the world that demands an "'anchoring' of the perceiving subject" (CI 57). Deleuze removes cinema from the realm of phenomenology by pulling from Edmund Husserl and, primarily, Bergson's theories that "all consciousness is consciousness of something" (Husserl), and "all consciousness is something" (Bergson) (CI 56). These are understandings of the world that replace the phenomenological notion of a centered subject with an acentered understanding of the world. Therefore consciousness is no longer limited to one perceiving subject. Instead, in this acentered universe of the cinematic image all things are conscious, which is to say that consciousness exists in all of the constituent parts of the cinematic image. Thus the essence of cinema lies in the movement, or relations, between these different conscious parts. The plane of immanence is exactly this understanding of the world as that which is

constituted by conscious parts, or attributes, and the movement between these conscious parts.

The plane of immanence as applied to the cinema refers to both the different parts of the cinematic image and the interactions between these parts: “The plane of immanence is the movement . . . which is established between the parts of each system and between one system and another, which crosses them all, stirs them all up together and subjects them all to the condition which prevents them from being absolutely closed” (Deleuze, *CI* 59). The interaction between these different parts on the plane of immanence of the movement-image consists of interactions that figure movement, both within a single frame and shot and among different shots. Together, these two kinds of movements create the forward progressing “open whole” of the movement-image (Deleuze, *CI* 55).³ On the plane of immanence of the time-image, on the other hand, the relations and interactions between the constitutive parts of the cinematic plane of immanence figure time. In order to more fully comprehend the difference between these two planes, we must first dive even deeper into the interactions between the conscious parts of the cinematic plane of immanence, and then define these different parts.

Because the plane of immanence is an acentered universe, it lives through encounters among its constituent bodies or parts. These encounters between bodies are encounters of affect and they determine the quality of actions that a body will execute

³ In describing the two kinds of movements within the movement-image regime, Deleuze states, “Thus in a sense movement has two aspects. On the one hand, that which happens between objects or parts; on the other hand that which expresses the duration or the whole. The result is that duration, by changing qualitatively, is divided up in objects, and objects, by gaining depth, by losing their contours, are united in duration. We can therefore say that movement relates the objects of a closed system to open duration, and duration to the objects of the system which it forces to open up” (*CI* 11).

that results from such an encounter. This is where turning to the ways in which Deleuze relies on Spinoza becomes instructive towards his own cinematic plane of immanence. Let us begin by looking at one of Deleuze's more telling delineations of the ways in which he understands Spinozist philosophy:

In short, if we are Spinozists we will not define a thing by its form, nor by its organs and its functions, nor as a substance or a subject. Borrowing terms from the Middle Ages, or from geography, we will define it by *longitude* and *latitude*. A body can be anything; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity. We call longitude of a body the set of relations of speed and slowness, or motion and rest, between particles that compose it from this point of view, that is, between *unformed elements*. We call latitude the set of affects that occupy a body at each moment, that is, the intensive states of an *anonymous force* (force for existing, capacity for being affected). In this way we construct the map of a body. The longitudes and latitudes together constitute Nature, the plane of immanence or consistency, which is always variable and is constantly being altered, composed and recomposed, by individuals and collectivities. (*Spinoza* 127-128)

Longitude refers to the body and here Deleuze describes the body as that which is always in flux, or “unformed” (*Spinoza* 127). Earlier in this same chapter of Deleuze's text on Spinoza, he shows that Spinoza's understanding of the body has two qualities. The first is the “*kinetic*” proposition, and this is an understanding of the body as that which is defined

by moving particles (123). These particles are never at rest and thus the body can never be understood as a form because form implies finality. The body never reaches a final state, or realm of stasis, because its constituent particles are constantly encountering other bodies on the plane of immanence. Take, for example, the different changes that the central character of Alfred Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* undergoes throughout his interactions with different bodies on the film's plane of immanence. At the beginning of the film the protagonist (Roger Thornhill) is a conforming, timid, and selfish advertising executive, but through his encounters with a mysterious lover, international spies, and the C.I.A. he evolves into a courageous action-hero. And herein lies the second quality of the body. This is the "*dynamic*" proposition of the body and this proposition refers to the body's "capacity for affecting and being affected" (Deleuze, *Spinoza* 123). The capacity for affecting and being affected itself has two sides. These two sides are "*the power of acting*" and "*the power of being acted upon*" (Deleuze, *Spinoza* 27). Here, we can think of the body as that which works through two kinds of movements. The first kind is the movement of receiving actions and the second kind is the movement of executing reactions. Both of these two kinds of movements are governed by affective encounters. So when a body executes reactions it does so because an affective encounter with another body created within it the power to act. Like in *Vertigo* (Hitchcock) when, at the end of the film, the central character (Scottie) who has been suffering from vertigo throughout overcomes his acrophobia and forces himself and Judy to the top of the church steeple after he realizes that he's been the victim of an intricate scheme of murder and fraud. Furthermore, to receive an action is to be in an affective encounter with another body that

acts upon one's own body. When Scottie and Judy reach the top of the church's roof she falls off the building and Scottie is left stunned and immobile staring down at the ground (*Vertigo*). Thus when understanding the body as that which is always fluctuating between reacting and being acted upon, affects are that which function as something like a pivot in between these two kinds of movements on the plane of immanence. To go about it another way, the plane of immanence consists of bodies and affects, and the pivot is where these two forces, one material the other immaterial, meet.⁴

When Deleuze applies this understanding of the world as that which is constituted by bodies and affects to the cinematic image, he translates this pivot on the plane of immanence as a gap or interval:

What happens and what can happen in this acentered universe where everything reacts on everything else? We must not introduce a different factor of another nature. So what can happen is this: at any point whatever of the plane an *interval* appears – a gap between the action and reaction.
(*CI* 61)

Deleuze understands this gap as a temporal entity and he describes it as a “center of indetermination” that stands out among the other conscious and moving parts of the acentered cinematic plane of immanence (*CI* 62-63).⁵ In other words, the cinematic plane

⁴ For Spinoza the plane of immanence is Nature, or God, and he describes this Nature/God as a single Substance which is “in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing, from which it must be formed.” Bodies, for Spinoza, are Attributes of this single substance of Nature: “By attribute I understand the affections of a substance, *or* that which is in another through which it is also conceived.” Finally, Spinoza understands as affects as Modes: “By mode I understand the affections of a substance, *or* that which is in another through which it is also conceived” (*Ethics* 1).

⁵ In this same section of *Cinema I* Deleuze refers to the center of indetermination as a brain in stating, “And the brain is nothing but this – an interval, a gap between an action and a reaction. The brain is

of immanence has three facets: The quality of receiving actions, the quality of executing reactions, and the quality of indetermination as a temporal gap that lies in between action and reaction. Bodies and affects, the longitudes and latitudes, are that which constitute these different facets. The facet of receiving actions is what Deleuze calls the perception-image and this is an image of a looking body, whether it be the body of the camera as looker, or the body of a character as looker. The facet of executing reactions refers to the action-image and this is an image of bodies acting within the spaces that they exist in. Finally, the facet of indetermination is the affection-image and this is neither the image of a body being affected nor the image of a body affecting another body. Rather, it is an image of affect in-itself, which is to say time in-itself. This is the place where the cinematic image no longer figures the actual realm of determined spatio-temporal coordinates. Instead, here we leave the realm of movement and physical spatio-temporal coordinates and enter the virtual realm of temporality, the realm in which action is replaced by inaction. This is an image of coexistent pure potentialities, and its two poles are reflection and intensity.⁶ These three facets (receiving actions/perception-image, executing reactions/action-image, and temporal gap/affection-image) are the three facets of an eternal becoming that bodies live through on the cinematic plane of immanence.

certainly nor a center of images from which one could begin, but itself constitutes one special image among others. It constitutes a center of indetermination in the acentered universe of images" (62-63).

⁶ Deleuze turns to Griffith and Eisenstein as his main exemplars of these two sides of affect in the movement-image cinema: "We can already recognize in this the two types of close-up, one of which was the hallmark of Griffith, and the other of Eisenstein. There are famous Griffith close-ups in which everything is organized for the pure and soft outline of feminine face (notably the iris procedure): a young woman thinks about her husband in *Enoch Arden*. But, in Eisenstein's *The General Line*, the handsome face of the priests is dissolved, giving way to a cheating look which links up with the narrow back of the head and the fleshy earlobe: it is as if the traits of faceity were escaping the outline, and testifying to the priest's *ressentiment*" (CI 89).

The affection-image is a distinct image that is separate from the realm of acting bodies.⁷ In doing so, the affection-image relies on a figuration of space that differs from the ways in which images of acting bodies understand and figure space. In short, in the affection-image time cuts apart the homogeneity and cohesiveness of space, while images of acting bodies figure space as cohesive so as to foster movement. On the movement-image's plane of immanence, cinema figures affect by abstracting itself from bodies moving within determined spaces and shifting to images of the close-up of the face. When the cinematic image transitions to the temporal realm of a close-up of the face we leave behind the locale of physical spatio-temporal coordinates, locales in which bodies constantly move into and encounter with one another, and into to the abstract realm of entity: "The close-up does *not* tear away its object from a set of which it would form part, of which it would be a part, but on the contrary *it abstracts it from all spatio-temporal coordinates*, that is to say it raises it to the state of Entity" (Deleuze, *CI* 95-96).⁸ Thus, the movement-image's plane of immanence consists of two kinds of images: Images of moving bodies in physical spatio-temporal coordinates, and images of the close-up of the face as abstracted from physical spatio-temporal coordinates.

The movement-image regime prioritizes this former image, the image of moving bodies, and turns the affection-image into something like a peripheral image on its plane

⁷ Deleuze delineates this temporal and virtual realm as distinct from the realm of movement and action in stating, "For we, living matter or centers of indetermination, have specialized one of our facets or certain of our points into receptive organs as the price of condemning them to immobility, while delegating our activity to organs of reaction that we have consequently liberated. In these conditions, when our immobilized receptive facet absorbs a movement instead of reflecting it, our activity can only respond by a 'tendency', and 'effort' which replaces the action which becomes momentarily or locally impossible" (Deleuze, *CI* 65-66).

⁸ Here is how Deleuze describes this process: "The affection-image, for its part, is abstracted from the spatio-temporal coordinates which would relate it to a state of things, and abstracts the face from the person to which it belongs in the state of things" (Deleuze, *CI* 97).

of immanence of movement. This is, in other words, another way of putting what Deleuze refers to as “an indirect representation” of time (*CI ix*).⁹ In making the images of acting bodies the central images of its plane of immanence, determined spaces become the dominant spatial quality of the movement-image regime. Hodological connections structure these homogeneous and determined spaces and thus allow bodies to move freely in and among them. Deleuze associates hodological spaces with Euclidean spaces because these are spaces that can be conceptualized and manipulated through their fixed dimensions and coordinates that clearly outline the peripheries of the space, and the sound inter-connections within the space that logically connect all of its different facets (*C2 128*). Another way to think about this is to understand the relationship between space and bodies on the movement-image’s plane of immanence as Hegelian in that the finite and connective structures of these spaces allow bodies to rationally comprehend them and thenceforward use space to their own advantage. In this realm of actuality bodies exist as “*centres of forces* in space,” as opposed to the state of bodies as centers of indetermination within the virtual and temporal realm of the affection-image (Deleuze, *C2 128*).¹⁰ Take for example the ways in which the different groups of bodies in Fritz Lang’s *M* define the different spaces of Berlin throughout their actions in the narrative, or

⁹ In the preface to *Cinema I* Deleuze states, “Their [the perception, affection, and action images] distribution certainly does determine a representation of time, but it must be noted that time remains the object of an indirect representation in so far as it depends on montage and derives from movement-images” (*ix*).

¹⁰ Deleuze uses the phrase “centres of forces in space” and associates hodological spaces with Euclidean spaces when describing the kinds of narratives that use these determined spaces of the movement-image cinema: “This economy of narration, then, appears both in the concrete shape of the action-image and hodological space and in the abstract figure of the movement-image and Euclidean space. Movement and actions my present many obvious anomalies, breaks, insertions, superimpositions and decompositions; they none the less obey laws which are based on the distribution of *centres of forces* in space. We can say in general that time is the object of an indirect representation in so far as it is a consequence of action, is dependent on movement and is inferred from space. Hence, no matter how disordered it is, it remains in principle a chronological time” (*C2 128*).

the ways in which the stagecoach in John Ford's western of the same name guides us through the different surfaces of western civilization: The developed and portentous city, the hostile and savage terrain, and the lawless slums of outlaws and prostitutes (*Stagecoach*). These are all different situations created by the actions of moving bodies.¹¹ Simply put, determined spaces foster the action-image.

When the plane of immanence of the movement-image momentarily shifts from an indirect representation of time to a direct representation of time by moving into a close-up of the face it alters the spatiality in which bodies exist. One of the ways in which we can understand the affection-image as a peripheral image on the movement-image's plane of immanence is by turning towards the ways in which the spatiality of the affection-image differs from the determined spaces of the action-image. When this regime of cinema does briefly move into the close-up of the face, we momentarily enter a space that lives through different properties than the hodological spaces that foster movement. A close-up of the face is not a close-up of a body in a determined space. The close-up of the face completely abandons physical spatio-temporal coordinates by moving into a spatiality structured by time. In order to figure this temporal realm of reflection and intensity, space becomes broken by time. Cassavetes splits it, Bergman de-individuates it, and Dreyer whittles it out:

¹¹ When Deleuze delineates the action-image as a formula constituted by an original situation which then turns into a new situation because of the actions of an individual or a group (the SAS' formula) he turns to Ford as an exemplar of this structure: "Throughout his work, Ford constantly grasps the evolution of a situation, which introduces a perfectly real time. There is certainly a great difference between the Western and what can be called the neo-Western; but it is not explicable in terms of a succession of genres, or a transition from the closed to the open in space. In Ford, the hero is not content to re-establish the episodically threatened order. The organization of the film, the organic representation, is not a circle, but a spiral where the situation of arrival differs from the situation of departure: SAS'" (CI 147).

In the affective film par excellence, Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc*, there is a whole historical state of things, social roles and individual or collective characters, real connections between them – Joan, the bishop, the Englishman, the judges, the kingdom, the people: in short, the trial. But there is something else, which is not exactly eternal or suprahistorical: it is what Péguy called 'internal'. It is like two presents which ceaselessly intersect, one of which is endlessly arriving and the other is already established. . . . It is the same event but one part of it is profoundly realised in a state of things, whilst the other is all the more irreducible to all realisation.¹² (Deleuze, *CI* 106)

In this virtual realm of the close-up of the face, physical spatio-temporal coordinates of determined and hodological spaces are replaced by heterogeneous shards of space, as here the plane of immanence of movement momentarily shifts to a plane of immanence of time by figuring a fragmented, rather than cohesive, world.

One of the most salient differences between the movement-image's plane of immanence and the time-image's plane of immanence is that in the time-image cinema the temporal realm of the affection-image moves from a peripheral image to the plane's central image. Towards the end of *Cinema 1* Deleuze shows that the movement-image regime begins to crumble when the action-image falls apart and forces cinema to

¹² Deleuze's insights on Bergman's use of the face are also very relevant here because he points out that in Bergman's cinema the face captures the state of human's as separated from their social roles: "A character has abandoned his profession, renounced his social role; he is no longer able to, or no longer wants to communicate, is struck by an almost absolute muteness; he even loses his individuation, to the point where he takes on a strange resemblance to the other, a resemblance by default or by absence. Indeed, these functions of the face presuppose the reality of a state of things where people act and perceive. The affection-image makes them dissolve, disappear. We recognize one of Bergman's scripts" (*CI* 99).

reevaluate the ways in which it works through its constitutive images of actions, perceptions, and affections: “The soul of the cinema demands increasing thought, even if thought begins by undoing the system of actions, perceptions, and affections on which the cinema had fed up to that point” (206). This is, in other words, a reshuffling of the three different facets (action-image, perception-image, and affection-image) of the plane of immanence. This new plane of immanence of the immediate postwar cinema is one that favors affects over bodies. And here, the dominant spatiality of this temporal plane of immanence is no longer one of determined and hodological spaces. Rather, the dominant spatiality becomes that which lives through fragmentation and heterogeneity, as the affection-image evolves and expands from being figured in close-ups of the face to finding a home in the any-space-whatever. The any-space-whatever is the means by which the time-image makes affect its central image. It is, in other words, the externalization of affect that changes the plane of immanence from one of being dominated by movement, to that which is dominated by time. In doing so, any-spaces-whatever restructure the spaces in which bodies exist into spaces of fragmentation and heterogeneity. These virtual spaces, that in the movement-image’s plane of immanence were reserved solely to the close up of a face, now organize the milieus in which bodies exist on the temporal plane of immanence. Deleuze defines any-spaces-whatever as follows:

Any-space-whatever is not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places. It is a perfectly singular space, which has merely lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or connections of its own parts, so

that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as pure locus of the possible. What in fact manifests the instability, the heterogeneity, the absence of link of such a space, is a richness in potentials or singularities which are, as it were, prior conditions of all actualization, all determination. (*C1* 109)

These are, in other words, spaces of time that divide the world into different splinters that simply coexist, instead of reinforce, with one another, and on this temporal plane of immanence it is no longer possible for bodies to move and act so that they can change the milieus in which they exist.

Deleuze describes the relationship between bodies and determined spaces in the movement-image plane of immanence as one of fostering “sensory-motor situations,” situations in which the body is free to move, act, and change its own milieu. Within the any-space-whatever a body’s relationship to space differs greatly from a body’s relationship to determined spaces. Deleuze describes the situations created within the temporal plane of immanence as “optical-sound situations,” situations in which the body is reduced to the state of passive seer (*C2* 2).¹³ Take, for example, the central character’s relationship to her own milieu in Antonioni’s *Red Desert*. On this temporal plane of immanence, Giuliana’s relationship to the other bodies on the plane of immanence is one of alienation. The scene within the red shack is telling. Within the shack, Giuliana is an impotent figure, a passive seer, because she does not accord with the other bodies in the

¹³ In the first chapter of *Cinema 2* Deleuze differentiates Italian Neo-Realism from the realism of the movement-image in stating, “What defines neo-realism is this build-up of purely optical situations (and sound ones, although there was no synchronized sound at the start of neo-realism), which are fundamentally distinct from the sensory-motor situations of the action-image in the old realism” (2).

shack, nor, and most importantly, with the body of the shack itself. These are two heterogeneous bodies, Giuliana and the shack, coexisting, rather than reinforcing, with each other.¹⁴ Throughout the scene Giuliana can only observe without acting. Immobile, she first watches the other bodies as they too struggle to move beyond the realm of optical-sound situation and into a sensory-motor situation (they can only talk about engaging in sexual intercourse). Then she looks out the window of the shack and becomes even more powerless when another body, the body of an industrial ship, enters the plane of immanence. This additional heterogeneous body further fragments the temporal plane of immanence. Giuliana then exits the shack only to find herself transfixed in the fog, yet another disconnected body. Simply put, through its constituent qualities of disconnection and heterogeneity the temporal plane of immanence of *Red Desert* diminishes a body's ability to move in space, as all these different bodies, the body of Giuliana, the bodies of the other bourgeois characters, the bodies of the working class characters, the body of the shack, the ship, and the fog are all separated from one another on this fragmented any-space-whatever. Such an understanding of the world is a far cry from the determined spaces of the movement-image's plane of immanence, spaces structured by hodological connections that allow the action-image to flourish.

¹⁴ Another way of putting this is to say that here the actual and the virtual coexist with each other and become indiscernible. Deleuze refers to this regime as a crystalline regime: "The crystalline regime is completely different: the actual is cut off from its motor linkages, or the real from its legal connections, and the virtual, for its part, detaches itself from actualizations, starts to be valid for itself. The two modes of existence are now combined in a circuit where the real and the imaginary, the actual and the virtual, chase after each other, exchange their roles and become indiscernible" (C2 127).

1.3 Full Metal Jacket and the Annihilation of Movement and Time

I now want to venture away from the movement-image and time-image regimes by articulating the ways in which the spatiality of the plane of immanence of American cinema in late capitalism differs from the hodological spaces of the movement-image regime and the fragmented spaces of the time-image regime by specifically turning towards Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* and, first, reading it against the preceding Kubrick films that Deleuze discusses in regard to the time-image regime and, then, delineating the ways in which it differs from the spatiality of the movement-image regime. For Deleuze, Kubrick uses space to create a cinema of thought. Deleuze calls this a brain cinema and here he points out that Kubrick's films work through two contradictory forces, the force of the brain and the force of bodies. This is the way in which Kubrick's cinema figures the fragmented world of coexisting temporalities that are so vital to the temporal plane of immanence. The heterogeneity between these different temporal structures, one brain, the other body, figures affect through the any-space-whatever. Deleuze's explication is telling: "If we look at Kubrick's work, we see the degree to which it is the brain which is mise en scène. Attitudes of the body achieve a maximum level of violence, but they depend on the brain" (C2 205). In other words, Kubrick's any-spaces-whatever capture the two sides of affect, reflection and intensity, and in so doing they figure a world where bodies lack the ability to create change within the milieus they exist. Deleuze shows us that in *Dr. Strangelove* the large table in the war room is the brain which governs the bodies of human beings, in *2001: A Space Odyssey* the brain is the giant computer, and in *The Shining* it is the Overlook Hotel (C2 205). But we can take this line of thought even

further to show how Kubrick uses these interactions of difference to further develop this temporal plane. In Thomas Allen Nelson's detailed and instructive study of Kubrick's filmic tendencies he defines the filmmakers aesthetics as a set of aesthetics that is concerned with the "consequences of contingency" (17), and throughout his study he works through the different ways in which Kubrick's form relies on juxtapositions between different kinds of spaces. For example, Nelson points out that *Dr. Strangelove* is constituted by the different spaces of the war room, B-52 bomber, and the air force base (84). In *2001: A Space Odyssey*, Nelson turns towards the different spaces of the interiority and enclosure of the space ships and space stations, and the exterior outer space, a space of expansion (120). In *The Shinning* he cites the differences between the interior realm of the hotel, and the exterior realm of the giant maze (Nelson 204-205). And in *Paths of Glory* it is the difference between the interior chateau and the exterior trenches (Nelson 43).¹⁵ We can carry Nelson's analysis back to Deleuze's any-spaces-whatever by simply noting that these are all fragmented and heterogeneous spaces that coexist, rather than reinforce, with each other. In other words, these are the various ways in which each of these films create a temporal plane of immanence by structuring the world through disconnection and difference, a phenomenon that allows affect as both reflecting and intensive, brain and body, to flourish.

The plane of immanence of *Full Metal Jacket*, which came out seven years after *The Shinning* (the latest Kubrick film that Deleuze references), relies on a very different

¹⁵ Here Nelson states, "The first half of *Paths* (marked by the film's initial fade-out, after the failed attack on the Ant Hill) further develops this ironic structure of oppositions and parallels between the chateau and the trenches, through which Kubrick will turn a system of clearly defined contrasts into a maze of paradoxical associations" (43).

world-spatial structure than Kubrick's earlier films. Gone is the distinction between a body and a brain, an exterior space and an interior space. There are no more war rooms, haunted hotels, space ships, and chateaus that combat the external realm of bodies in flight. Rather than working through a coexistence of heterogeneous temporal structures, *Full Metal Jacket* places its bodies at the service of a single encompassing space. Within this new structure of homogeneity, bodies themselves no longer relate to their milieus through optical-sound situations. Instead, their relationship to these spatial milieus is one of intense-searching situations.

Full Metal Jacket is split into two narratives. In a sense it is two films, but what marks each of its two narratives as distinct from the temporal plane of immanence is that they both rely on placing bodies within a homogeneous space. In fact, we can think of the first narrative of *Full Metal Jacket* as that which works through a plane of immanence similar to the movement-image regime. Here the bodies of soldiers are placed within the determined space of the recruit-training depot. Such a space includes exterior and interior facets, but unlike the heterogeneity of the any-space-whatever, these are simply different facets of the same spatiality. They are, in other words, spaces that reinforce each other through hodological connections. These different facets of space are the residence hall, the communal bathroom, the obstacle course, the shooting range, and jogging trails. Although some of these spaces are more physically demanding than others, they are all spaces that a body can easily conceive and therefore they are spaces that foster action and change. Within these spaces movement flourishes as bodies evolve and exhibit their physical prowess: On the obstacle course bodies conquer heights by climbing over walls,

on the shooting range bodies display keen precision with deadly weapons, and on the jogging trails bodies demonstrate their synchronized movements by marching in unison. These are, in short, spaces that foster sensory-motor situations.

The second narrative of *Full Metal Jacket* places its bodies within a different kind of homogenous space than the first narrative. This is not a homogeneous space that fosters sensory-motor-situations. Instead, this is a homogenous space that fosters intense-searching situations. Once the film moves from the plane of immanence of the recruit depot to the plane of immanence of the chaotic Vietnam jungles, bodies shift from living through movements of dexterity and physical prowess to living through thoughtless movements of desperation and irrationality. Within the maze like structure of the Vietnam jungles we now enter a plane of immanence structured by a homogenous space that *lacks* hodological connections. Here bodies now lose the ability to conceive the milieus in which they exist. This is, in other words, the phenomenon of space coming to life and obstructing movement, a spatial plane of immanence. Thus the most telling moments of *Full Metal Jacket* come when bodies exist in a lost state of confused searching.

Full Metal Jacket's climactic scene is key. A band of soldiers moving from one checkpoint to another in the midst of palm trees, dirt roads, demolished buildings, and never-ending explosions, smoke, and fire mistake their geographical coordinates and find themselves lost in the jungle. As the character named Eight Ball tells Cowboy (the squad leader) while looking over a map, "I think we're here. And we should be here." Upon realizing that they are in unknown territory the soldiers begin cautiously exploring the

land in order to get back on course, but are almost immediately halted by an unseen Vietnamese sniper who guns down one of the rooming soldier from an upper level of one of the standing buildings that towers over the terrain in which the soldiers are now reduced to scrambling animals. From here on out the soldiers have been thrown into an intense-searching situation. They first take cover behind a small wall of rubble. The plane of immanence then moves into a perception-image, an image of the soldiers searching out into an ominous space for that which they cannot see nor conceive. They are, in other words, trapped within a homogeneous space without finite coordinates and logical inter-connections, and their actions moving forward are now actions governed by this chaotic and enveloping spatiality.

The plane of immanence of the Zapruder film throws Mrs. Kennedy into an intense-searching situation immediately after her husband is shot. From here on out she is a victim of space and reduced to climbing wildly out of a moving car. A similar process happens in *Full Metal Jacket*. Once the plane of immanence throws the bodies of the soldiers into intense-searching situations, they too are reduced to fleeing animals. Eight Ball, the soldier who was gunned down by the sniper lays in the middle of the terrain screaming in agony. From behind their cover, the other soldiers shoot thoughtlessly into the air. One soldier flees from their cover and into the terrain in an attempt to help Eight Ball, but he too becomes the snipers prey. More shooting and screaming ensue. Cowboy desperately tries to calm the situation. He yells at his men to stop shooting, "Cease fire. You can't see the sniper!" This is a fleeting moment of rationality, if we can even call it that. The character, conveniently referred to as Animal, breaks the peace. He flees from

their cover and into the deadly space in which the sniper is taking aim. Here the camera itself also adapts to the chaotic situation by morphing into handheld and abandoning a stable frame. On his suicidal quest, Animal screams like a mad man while firing his rifle at everything in sight. From behind their cover the other soldiers resume shooting at nothing but space, their eternal enemy on this plane.

This spatial plane of immanence makes it way into other formative Vietnam War films. In Michael Comino's *The Deer Hunter* a trio of American soldiers (Michael, Nick, and Steven) are forced into an intense-searching situation when they find themselves captured and held hostage in a cage that lies in the middle of a river within the encompassing spatiality of the Vietnam jungles. Here, the three soldiers are completely at the mercy of space as they have little to no control over their situation and lack understanding of their geographical location. In short, this spatial plane of immanence reduces the three soldiers to animal like behaviors and insane actions. Within their cages they are submerged in muddy water, they dwell with rats and bugs, and are forced to put their lives on the line on a regular basis by playing Russian Roulette. In fact, their only means of escape is to first give themselves completely over to space by embracing their savage situation and put guns to their own heads before they can turn them on their enemy. But once they do break free from their cages it is only fitting that they have nowhere to go except to simply let the river wash them down stream. On this spatial plane of immanence of late capitalism, these three bodies will never again be able to gain control over the milieus in which they exist. Michael, who before the war was the great deer hunter, now misfires when taking aim. The traumas of war turn Steven into an

invalid, and Nick loses the ability to differentiate life from death, as he spends his remaining postwar years gambling his life away by playing Russian Roulette. In a similar manner, the fanatic and renegade soldiers that exist on *Apocalypse Now's* (Coppola) spatial plane of immanence adhere to Nick's insanity by finding themselves in a perpetual situation of intense-searching, a situation which makes them lose the ability to differentiate war from play.

We are now left with asking about the place of time, the place of affect, on this spatial plane of immanence. For this spatial plane of immanence is not only that which obstructs movement, it also pulverizes time. The movement-image's plane of immanence treats affect as a peripheral image by reserving it to the close-up of the face and the time-image's plane of immanence makes affect its primary concern by externalizing it into the any-space-whatever. The spatial plane of immanence, on the other hand, fractures affect. Let us momentarily go back to *Full Metal Jacket* and the ways in which it differs from Kubrick's preceding time-image films. *Full Metal Jacket* has very little room for time and affect. Whereas Kubrick's earlier time-image films cut space through time by structuring the world through the any-space-whatever, *Full Metal Jacket* performs something of an inverse phenomena in fracturing time through space by structuring the world through a homogeneous and enveloping spatiality that lacks hodological connections. The any-space-whatever allows Kubrick to create a plane of immanence of a brain and body that allows the two sides of affect, reflection and intensity, to flourish. *Full Metal Jacket*, on the other hand relies on a plane of immanence without a brain, a plane of immanence that fractures time into affection-images of pure intensity. This is

affect without reflection, time dominated by space. On the spatial plane of immanence cinema no longer figures affect as a virtual moment of thought. There is no more room for thought. Affect has been pulverized into intensity and violence, animal-like movements that come at the expense of the totality of space. This is the image of a flailing body scrambling out of a moving car (*The Zapruder film*), the image of a mad soldier firing a rifle at everything in sight as he runs across a hostile terrain (*Full Metal Jacket*), the image of a prisoner screaming while he puts a loaded gun to his own head and pulls the trigger (*The Deer Hunter*), and the image of fanatic soldiers surfing off the Vietnam coasts in the midst of battle (*Apocalypse Now*).

In a world of homogeneity without hodological connections, space swallows time. The connections that constitute this homogenous spatiality are not only that which prevent bodies from conceiving their situations, they are also that which fosters violence and intensity. The spatial plane of immanence is a homogenous world constituted by contradictory connections.

2. Searching Through Sectoral Uneven Development

2.1 From Disconnection to Contradiction

Throughout his formulation of the cinema as that which grows from one regime to another, Gilles Deleuze resists making strong connections between cinema's own evolution and the rifts and evolution of twenty-first century capitalism. The most explicit acknowledgement that Deleuze makes between the ruptures inherent to cinema and the world in which it exists is to World War II. For Deleuze, the war functions as a break in between the movement-image and time-image regimes because of the various ways in which the war physically restructured the world, a phenomenon marked by deserted regions, abandoned buildings, and demolished cities (C2 xi).¹⁶ These are some of the constituent features of the time-image cinema's any-spaces-whatever, spaces cut apart by time and affect that structure the world through fragmentation, heterogeneity, disconnection, and emptiness. While discussing the any-space-whatever in *Cinema 1*, Deleuze is forward enough to cite the war as an influence for the prevalence of any-spaces-whatever in the postwar cinema:

...after the war, a proliferation of such spaces [any-spaces-whatever] could be seen both in film sets and in exteriors, under various influences. The first, independent of the cinema, was the post-war situation with its towns demolished or being reconstructed, its waste grounds, its shanty

¹⁶ In his preface to *Cinema 2*, Deleuze delineates the ways in which World War II functions as a break in cinema's evolution in stating, "Why is the Second World War taken as a break? The fact is that, in Europe, the post-war period has greatly increased the situations which we no longer know how to react to, in spaces which we no longer know how to describe. These were 'any spaces whatever', deserted but inhabited, disused warehouses, waste ground, cities in the course of demolition or reconstruction. And in these any-spaces-whatever a new race of characters was stirring, a kind of mutant: they saw rather than acted, they were seers" (xi).

towns, and even in places where the war had not penetrated, its undifferentiated urban tissue, its vast unused places, docks, warehouses, heaps of girders and scrap iron. (120)

On this temporal plane of immanence the affection-image trumps the action-image as optical-sound situations replace sensory-motor situations, and fragmented spaces of temporality replace hodological spaces of movement. Hodological spaces are determined and homogeneous spaces that resemble Euclidean spaces because they are made up of fixed dimensions and coordinates that outline the peripheries of the space, and sound inter-connective structures within the space that logically connect each of its different facets.¹⁷ These spaces constitute the plane of immanence of the movement-image regime and figure a cohesive world where bodies can logically conceive and change the milieus in which they exist. To go about it another way, on the plane of immanence of the movement-image bodies exist as “centres of forces” within a cohesive world constituted by actual and hodological spaces, a world in which the action-image flourishes (Deleuze, C2 128). The time-image’s plane of immanence, on the other hand, places bodies within a broken world of heterogeneous spaces and virtual connections, a world where the affection-image flourishes and bodies existing as “centers of indetermination” are

¹⁷ Deleuze associates hodological spaces with Euclidean spaces when describing the kinds of narratives that use these determined spaces of the movement-image cinema: “This economy of narration, then, appears both in the concrete shape of the action-image and hodological space and in the abstract figure of the movement-image and Euclidean space. Movement and actions my present many obvious anomalies, breaks, insertions, superimpositions and decompositions; they none the less obey laws which are based on the distribution of *centres of forces* in space. We can say in general that time is the object of an indirect representation in so far as it is a consequence of action, is dependent on movement and is inferred from space. Hence, no matter how disordered it is, it remains in principle a chronological time” (C2 128). Also, refer to pages ten and eleven of chapter one of my thesis for a

reduced to passive seers (Deleuze, *CI* 62-63).¹⁸ This is the difference between The Ringo Kid's heroics on the movement-image's plane of immanence of *Stagecoach* (Ford) and Giuliana's impotence on the temporal plane of immanence of *Red Desert* (Antonioni).

So for Deleuze one of the salient differences between a cinema just before and just after the war, concerns the various implications of a world structure that moves from cohesion to fragmentation after the Second World War. This is a shift that forces cinema to restructure the ways in which it figures and refigures time, space, and movement in its attempt to understand the world in which it exist. I believe that, today, late capitalism and globalization have restructured the world in such a dramatic way that cinema has been forced to again reevaluate the ways in which it understands the interactions between time, space, and movement. To put it another way, I believe that with late capitalism it is no longer possible to overlook the rifts inherent to capitalism's growth as a significant contributing cause to the growth of cinema, the kind of cause that World War II played in the shift from a plane of immanence of movement to a plane of immanence of time. This is so because late capitalism physically restructures the world in such a way that the fragmented and disconnected world of the time-image's any-spaces-whatever become replaced by a world of contradictory connections. Contradictory connections refer to a spatiality in which opposing kinds of geographical regions reinforce each other through a connective structure of contradiction. On this spatiality complete heterogeneity

¹⁸ In *Cinema I* Deleuze refers to the temporal realm of the center of indetermination as a brain in stating, "And the brain is nothing but this – an interval, a gap between an action and a reaction. The brain is certainly not a center of images from which one could begin, but itself constitutes one special image among others. It constitutes a center of indetermination in the acenterd universe of images" (62-63).

disappears as, here, certain regions prosper exactly because other regions suffer. This is the homogeneous and contradictory world of uneven development.

It goes without saying that uneven development existed in both the regimes of the movement-image and time-image, and therefore one could simply discredit the significance that I am placing on uneven development as a determination for a new cinematic plane of immanence. But to do so would be to overlook the salience of the specific shape and quality that uneven development takes in late capitalism, an organizational structure that differs greatly from the kinds of uneven development that existed in the regimes of the movement-image and time-image. Throughout the rest of this chapter I will, first, turn primarily towards Ernest Mandel and Edward Soja's work on late capitalism, space, and uneven development in order to delineate the ways in which uneven development in late capitalism differs from the previous phases of uneven development that came before it. Through this discussion I then hope to show that specific shape and quality of uneven development in late capitalism, sectoral uneven development, gives more life to space. And cinema understands this phenomenon by figuring a plane of immanence in which space obstructs movement and pulverizes time. The intense and contradictory connections of sectoral uneven development throws bodies into intense-searching situations on a schizophrenic plane of immanence that is ripe with violence, perplexity, and contingency.

2.2 “Sectoral Uneven Development” and a Release of Intensity and Schizophrenia

It is imperative that we first define sectoral uneven development, as working through its different features we will allow us to gain a better understanding of the ways in which the plane of immanence of late capitalism is a plane of immanence in which space comes to life and becomes a more arduous and taxing entity. The history of capitalism is the history of overcoming its inherent contradictions. After World War II and the immediate postwar era, an event that David Harvey describes as “the greatest event in capitalism’s history of creative destruction” (18), capitalism found itself yet again restructuring the world so as to maintain its own existence. This period of creative destruction, however, was not one marked by massive demolition, ruin, and fragmentation. Rather, the period of restructuration that gave birth to late capitalism was marked by technological innovations, centralization on a global scale, and more flexible organizational structures that dramatically reshaped uneven development and redefined national borders. In turning to Fredric Jameson we can use 1973 as a simple marker for when this period began taking shape in a concrete way:

...the economic system and the cultural . . . somehow crystallized in the great shock of the crises of 1973 (the oil crisis, the end of the international gold standard, for all intents and purposes the end of the great wave of ‘wars of national liberation’ and the beginning of the end of traditional communism), which now that the dust clouds have rolled away, disclose

the existence, already in place, of a strange new landscape...
(Postmodernism, xx-xxi).¹⁹

From here alone we can get a sense of the fragmentation of the immediate postwar era disappearing and being replaced by something new.

In order to understand this new world structure that late capitalism creates we must dive even deeper into the specific causes of this period of restructuration and its implications, all of which will, I hope so, point us towards an understanding of space as becoming a more ominous and convoluted force than ever before. Soja describes restructuring as that which “conveys the notion of a ‘break’, if not a break, in secular trends, and a shift towards a significantly different order and configuration of social, economic, and political life. It thus evokes a sequential combination of falling apart and building up again...” (*PG* 159).²⁰ What Soja calls restructuring, Harvey calls ‘time-space compression’: “I mean to signal by that term processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter, sometimes in quite radical ways, how we represent the world to ourselves” (240). Whatever term we decide to use it is

¹⁹ This comes from Jameson’s *Postmodernism* text in which for him the concept of postmodernism refers to cultural rifts that are determined by the economic shifts of late capitalism: “...the expression *late capitalism* carries the other, cultural half of my title within it as well; not only is it something like a literal translation of the other expression, *postmodernism*, its temporal index seems already to direct attention to changes in the quotidian and on the cultural level as such” (xxi). There was a point in this thesis where I considered using the term *postmodernism* instead of *late capitalism*, but I ultimately chose to go with the latter term in an attempt to avoid the ongoing confusion that still persist around the term postmodernism. My interpretation of postmodernism is very much in line with Jameson in that I understand postmodernism as simply the cultural symptoms of late capitalism.

²⁰ Here is the full definition that Soja provides for Restructuring: “Restructuring in its broadest sense, conveys the notion of a ‘break’, if not a break, in secular trends, and a shift towards a significantly different order and configuration of social, economic, and political life. It thus evokes a sequential combination of falling apart and building up again, deconstruction and attempted reconstitution, arising from certain incapacities or perturbations in established systems of thought and action. The old order is sufficiently strained to preclude conventional pathwork adaptation and to demand significant structural change instead. Extending Giddens’ terminology, one can describe this break-and-shift as a time-space restructuration of social practices from the mundane to the *mondiale*” (159).

important to keep in mind that these changes of the ways in which we experience time and space on the plane of immanence stem from the inherent contradictions of capitalism that force capitalism into periods of crisis in which it must overcome overaccumulation in order to produce surplus-profit.²¹ Now, what marks late capitalism as distinct from the phases of capitalism that come before it concerns the specific ways in which it exploits labour in order to adapt to the contradictions of capitalism, and the physical-geographical implications of this process. In Mandel's seminal text, *Late Capitalism*, he shows that that throughout the history of capitalism the specific ways in which capitalism exploits labour creates a distinct geographical body or form.²² These different forms are spatial relationships between geographically developed and underdeveloped regions. In other words, the natural process of accumulation of capital itself creates geographical regions of development and geographical regions of underdevelopment so as to foster labour exploitation which creates accumulation. Soja, in reference to Costis Hadjumiachalis, describes the relationship between uneven development and the creation of surplus-profit, as the "geographical transfer of value" and he neatly sums up this process in stating:

In all of these forms of geographical value transfer [uneven development],
the basic pattern is the same whether it is described as part of the

²¹ Harvey defines overaccumulation as "a condition in which idle capital and idle labour supply could exist side by side with no apparent way to bring these idle resources together to accomplish socially useful tasks" (180).

²² In addition to delineating the ways in which uneven development allows capitalism to overcome its inherent contradictions, Mandel provides an instructive summary of the Marxist theory of value by showing that capitalism has no inherent limit to its existence because it lives through the transfer of value which is created by a difference in the number of hours a laborer works and the number of hours the laborer is paid to work: "The Marxist theory of value starts out from the axiom that the total mass of surplus-value is equal to the total mass of social *surplus labour*, or in other words is determined by the total number of manhours worked less the total amount of necessary labour" (100). In other words, capitalism creates surplus-value through exploiting the labourer by reducing his or her wages through extending the amount of hours worked (absolute surplus value) or intensifying the amount of labour that takes place within the working day (relative surplus value).

centralization and concentration of capital or the domination of core over periphery. A portion of surplus product generated at one location is blocked from being locally realized and accumulated, while the surplus produced at another location is augmented. (*PG* 115)

The geographical transfer of value is, in other words, the way in which different socioeconomic spaces contradict with, but also reinforce each other, a spatiality that is simultaneously homogeneous and contradictory.

Throughout the history of capitalism Mandel identifies three different phases of uneven development, or three different geographical bodies of capitalism, and points out that the main difference between the developed and underdeveloped regions concerns the amount of surplus-profit that is locally realized and accumulated within that region. The differing amount of surplus-profit that is locally realized in the developed and underdeveloped regions is determined by two factors: (1) the specific kinds of products that are produced, and (2) the means by which products are produced. Mandel shows us that this first difference, the difference between the kinds of products produced, creates the first two phases of uneven development. Here the principal difference between the two contrasting but codependent regions is a difference between agricultural production of raw materials and industrial production of finished goods. In the first phase of uneven development the differing geographical regions are that of the city and that of the countryside. In the second phase of uneven development the distinction between agricultural production and industrial production evolves beyond the local distinction of city and countryside and morphs into the contradictory relationship between imperialist

nations and colonized nations (Mandel 75-107).²³ It is somewhere within this second stage of uneven development where cinema turns to the any-space-whatever in order to figure a heterogeneous and fragmented world. Within this period of uneven development the division between developed and underdeveloped spheres are physically farther apart than ever before in the historical process of capitalism. Add to this the destructive and reconstructive nature of the Second World War itself and the simple fact that capitalism had yet to acquire a global reach, and we can see why the plane of immanence of the time-image is a plane of immanence of disconnection. All of this changes in the third phase of uneven development, the phase that brings about late capitalism. Here, uneven development no longer stems from a difference between the kinds of products that are produced (raw materials v. finished goods). Instead, the forces that create uneven development today directly refer to the means by which a product is produced. To put it another way, technological innovations in production plays a more active role in shaping uneven development in late capitalism, a phenomenon that can only come about once capitalism attains its global reach.

With globalization comes centralization, one of the most important innovations of late capitalism and the ways in which it structures its unique period of uneven development. Centralization refers to the growing concentration and organization of collective labour, mass production, and reproduction into individual centers of accumulation (corporations). This process reaches its most mature form in globalization where a unified world market opens the floodgates for credit and competition, “the two

²³ In my own discussion of uneven development throughout this entire section of my chapter I am relying primarily on Mandel’s chapter titled “The Three Main Sources of Surplus Profit in the Development of Modern Capitalism” from his text *Late Capitalism*.

most powerful levers of centralization” (Marx 779).²⁴ These two facets of centralization, credit and competition, become two of the most influential means by which capitalism accumulates surplus-value and structures uneven development in late capitalism.

The role of credit in late capitalism is anything but straightforward, as it contributes a great deal to turning this historical era into one marked by schizophrenia and uncertainty. Harvey describes the financial system under the current world market as that which has grown so complex that it surpasses common understanding (161). This is so because our present financial system depends greatly on fictitious capital, or future investments. Harvey defines fictitious capital as “capital that has a nominal money value and paper existence, but which at a given moment in time has no backing in terms of real productive activity or physical assets as collateral” (182). In late capitalism’s global market, future investments come from areas across the entire globe and apply to corporations all over the world. Again, Harvey points us to an instructive summary:

‘Banking,’ said the *Financial Times* (8 May 1987), ‘is rapidly becoming indifferent to the constraints of time, place and currency.’ It is now the case that ‘an English buyer can get a Japanese mortgage, an American can tap his New York Bank account through a cash machine in Hong Kong and a Japanese investor can buy shares in a London-based Scandinavian bank whose stock is denominated in sterling, dollars, Deutsche Marks and Swiss francs.’ (161)

²⁴ Marx describes the effects of centralization in stating, “Everywhere the increased scale for industrial establishments is the starting-point for a more comprehensive organization of the collective labour of many people, for a broader development of their material motive forces, i.e. for the progress transformation of isolated processes of production, carried on by customary methods into socially combined and scientifically arranged processes of production” (780).

The world of late capitalism has replaced fragmentation with a homogeneous spatiality in which places exist without roots and the connections between the different facets of space are incomprehensible.

With regards to competition, this is where we can more directly see the effects that late capitalism's emphasis on the means of production has on this new plane of immanence of space. Emphasis on the means of production refers to innovations in production that increases the amount of productivity that occurs in the working day. Such a process primarily comes in the form of technological innovations. Technological innovations refer both to highly developed machines that replace older industrial machines, and more efficient organizational structures.²⁵ This process has many features that move beyond the specific locus of production. In addition to technological and organizational innovations giving us robots of all sorts, it also fosters fragmented and migratory employment that comes in the form of "part-time, temporary or sub-contracted work arrangements" (Harvey 150), a greater emphasis on information and instant data analysis that reveals consumer trends and demands, an increased level of consumption of products with reduced half-lives, and a "proportionate surge in service employment" that is needed to keep pace with the high level of consumption (Harvey 156-159).²⁶ Because

²⁵ Soja's summary of the importance of technological rents in late-capitalism is instructive: "As he [Mandel] is careful to note, these technological rents – profits originating from advances in productivity based largely on technological developments and the organization of production systems – existed in earlier periods and were essential to the very origins of capitalism. In the absence of high levels of centralization and concentration of capital, however, the appropriation of technological rents tended to be limited in magnitude and of short duration, especially given uncontrolled entrepreneurial competition. Only with late capitalism, he argues, do they become predominant and efficiently systemic" (167).

²⁶ Soja conveniently lays out eight trends of late capitalism's restructuring period that first made themselves apparent in the 1980s:

- 1.) Segmented, flexible, and subcontracting production within centralization;

we have slightly ventured away from the specific shackles of production, it is crucial to remind ourselves that these various facets of competition's role in late capitalism stem from surplus-profit being extracted from changes in the means of production. Never before has capitalism been more obsessed with innovations in labour than in our contemporary era of centralization. It is as if once capitalism extended its reach across the entire globe its relationship to space changes from one of conquering the lifeless and dominated quality of space to one of turning space into that which compresses and suffocates movement and time through intensified competition, and the schizophrenic nature of fictitious capital.

This third phase of uneven development, sectoral uneven development, creates a spatiality of intensity and schizophrenia. I rely heavily on these two terms, intensity and schizophrenia, throughout this chapter because I believe they serve as a useful bridge in between the structure of late capitalism's sectoral uneven development, and the ways in which cinema figures this new condition of becoming in the world. I understand and define intensity as a level of extremity that prevents one from moving beyond the realm of the immediate. So intense labour is labour that can only be done through extreme focus on nothing but the task at hand. Intense actions are extreme actions that are absent of

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- 2.) "Technology-based integration of diversified industrial, research, and service activities that similarly reallocates capital and labour into sprawling spatial systems of production linking centers of administrative power over capital investment to a constellation of parallel branches, subsidiaries, subcontracting firms, and specialized public and private services;"
 - 3.) Global finance capital;
 - 4.) The end of state-managed capital and the creation of "footloose and mobile capital;"
 - 5.) "Intensified territorial competition among government units;"
 - 6.) "Reindustrialization based primarily on advanced technologies of production and centered on less-unionized sectors;"
 - 7.) Deeper fragmentation and "more pronounced polarization" between high pay, high skill jobs and low pay, low skill jobs;
 - 8.) Job growth occurs among weekly organized and "easily manipulated labour pools" (184-187).

sufficient comprehension of the situation. An intense spatiality, then, refers to a spatial structure that is so trying and complex that it disrupts comprehension and becoming, and therefore encourages bodies to live through extreme actions of thoughtlessness. In my use of schizophrenia I am drawing heavily from Jameson's definition of the concept as a break in the cognitive link between signifier and signified that thenceforward disrupts subjective time and creates an inability to sequentially link one's own past, present, and future, a process that then creates coexisting presents and intense affects:

This present of the world or material signifier comes before the subject with heightened intensity, bearing a mysterious charge of affect, here described in the negative terms of anxiety and loss of reality, but which one could just as well imagine in the positive terms of euphoria, a high, an intoxicatory or hallucinogenic intensity.²⁷ (*Postmodernism* 27-28)

Thus, a schizophrenic spatiality is a spatiality that attacks time and becoming through intensity. This is, in my opinion, a fitting description of late capitalism's sectoral uneven development because of its strong reliance on the schizophrenia of credit, that which breaks the linear links between the present and future, and intense competition (and intense labour) that demands extreme actions in order to keep pace with the rapid-fire changing nature of investments and innovations in production. The previous two phases of uneven development depended heavily on differences in the kinds of products produced (finished goods v. agriculture), and as a result distinctions in regions (city v. countryside) and national borders (first world v. third world) functioned as important

²⁷ I should also note here that Jameson's definition of schizophrenia derives from Jacques Lacan and his conception of the signifying chain (*Postmodernism* 26-27).

barriers and markers to conceptualizing the spatiality of these historical eras. However, because extraction of surplus-profit in late capitalism depends more on innovations in labour, this intense and schizophrenic spatiality replaces a spatiality of finite regional and national borders. This is, in other words, a shift from Euclidean and hodological spaces to the homogeneous and contradictory spaces of sectoral uneven development.

Sectoral uneven development refers to juxtapositions of developed and underdeveloped sectors within a homogeneous region (Mandel 103). I want to start delineating this phenomenon by pointing towards the role and physical make up of major centers of accumulation and development in late capitalism. Broadly speaking, here I am referring to the process of decentralization and recentralization that reflects “both the internationalization of the urban space economy and the composite technological and organizational changes that have marked the rise of flexible specializations in the production of goods and services” (Soja, *PG* 209).²⁸ These changing major centers of accumulation are, in other words, where we can most emphatically see the ways in which intensified competition and schizophrenic credit within centralization break down regional and national borders. Decentralization refers to the “rise of the outer city” or “peripheral urbanization” (Soja, *PG* 209 and 212). This is the process of growth sectors of accumulation sprouting up outside the boundaries of traditional metropolitan cores, and it is a direct influence of intensified competition. As technological innovation gives production a more flexible nature, it is now relatively easy for corporations to respond to intensified competition by expanding production into what once were unknown

²⁸ Soja’s quote here is in reference towards Michael Storper and Susan Christopherson’s “Flexible Specialization and Regional Industrial Agglomerations.”

territories. Perhaps the most prominent example of this process of production finding a new home in late capitalism concerns Asia's shift from a former Third World economy and nation to one of the premiere sites of production and manufacturing in the 1980s (Jameson, *Valences* 581).²⁹ Recentralization, on the other hand, refers to the "downtown renaissance" (Soja, *PG* 209), and this phenomenon is more directly related to schizophrenic nature of fictitious capital in a world market. Late capitalism has seen a massive regrowth in many large metropolitan areas, a phenomenon that is rarely without support from foreign capital. Soja's description of Los Angeles' funding in this historical era is telling:

More than half the prime properties in downtown Los Angeles is now owned by foreign corporations or by partnerships with foreign companies, led by Japan and Canada; and foreign capital is said to have financed as much as 90 percent of recent multistory building construction. Perhaps only in New York City has there been such a massive urban shopping spree by international capital in so short a time and from so many different sources. (*PG* 215)

²⁹ Here Jameson turns to Giovanni Arrighi to not only illustrate the ways in which Asia moves out of the Third World in late capitalism, but also the socioeconomic implications that this shift has on turning Africa into an "undevelopable" region: "In a remarkable historical analysis, Giovanni Arrighi has pinpointed the historical moment in which the former Third World began to separate into the industrial 'miracles' of the Asian tigers (Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and now China itself), and regions once no less 'underdeveloped' than they were, such as Africa, but which have now, particularly in their light, come to seem essentially undevelopable. This moment is of course the moment of the full-blown emergence of late capitalism (or globalization, or postmodernity), namely the Thatcher/Reagan moment of the early 1980s, in which 'the United States, which in the 1950s and 1960s had become the major source of world liquidity and of direct investment, in the 1980s became the world's main debtor nation and by far the largest recipient of foreign capital' (*Valences* 581).

On the surface, such rapid growth is certainly impressive and the capitalists will never shy away from proclaiming their progress. We must, however, remind ourselves that capitalism cannot grow without labour exploitation, which includes complete unemployment. Coexisting among these sectors of development caused by internationalization and technological innovations are large pools of the industrial reserve army: unemployed blue-collar workers, large amounts of homeless people, growing streams of immigration, and neighborhoods of ethnic and racial minorities. The resulting structure is one of deep polarization between high skill, high pay jobs, and low skill, low pay jobs, along with unemployment existing within the same geographical regions. To provide a concrete example of this sectoral structure of uneven development we can again turn to one of Soja's descriptions of the rising number of immigrants in Los Angeles:

...the contemporary restructuring period of the Los Angeles region has many characteristics of a restoration, an attempted reestablishment and refurbishing of a system of labour relations which had proved successful in the past. In this round of restructuring, however, the reserve army of minority and migrant workers (augmented by a massive entry of women into the workforce) has grown to unprecedented levels, creating an overflowing pool of cheap, relatively docile labour that is not only locally competitive but also able to compete with the new industrial concentrations of the Third World. (*PG* 216 – 217)

In other words, inherent to sectoral uneven development is a perpetual struggle between international and technologically savvy capital, and a hindered working class: “The labour movement, with a few exceptions, remains in a Fordist mode fighting against an enemy that has become too slippery and diffuse to negotiate within traditional ways” (Soja, *PG* 219).

Lastly, it is important to point out that this new phase of uneven development does not eliminate the previous phases of uneven development that came before it (Mandel 107).³⁰ Exploitation of agricultural regions and exploitation of less developed nations are two processes crucial to capitalism’s growth. What ultimately makes late capitalism such a distinct historical phase is that it throws this discombobulated spatial layer of sectoral uneven development over the more finite and determined spatial layers of regional uneven development and international uneven development. And in doing so it, for the first time, changes the function of space on the plane of immanence from a passive force to an active and dominating force. Space has come to life, it is malleable, it is chopped up and at the same time held together, it has been torn from its historical roots: “Never before has the spatiality of the industrial capitalist city or the mosaic of uneven regional development become so kaleidoscopic, so loosened from its nineteenth-century moorings, so filled with unsettling contrariety” (Soja, *PG* 187). And it has reacted to this process in the most aggressive and violent manner by becoming intense and schizophrenic spaces, spaces that attack bodies and affects, movement and time. The

³⁰ Here is how Mandel summarizes the point that I am trying to make: “It must constantly be borne in mind that the exploitation of agricultural regions, the exploitation of colonies and semi-colonies and the exploitation of technologically less developed branches of production, do not merely follow each other in succession as the main sources of surplus-profit, but that they also co-exist side by side in each of the three phases of the capitalist mode of production” (107).

world put itself back together after the direct postwar period and moved on from the shards of the any-spaces-whatever, but in doing so it created a world of violent contradictions, a plane of immanence in which space allows intensity to reign free.

2.3 *Blade Runner as a Film that Throws Bodies into the Chaos*

We can turn to Los Angeles, where it “all comes together” (Soja, *PG* 190). As touched on above, Los Angeles is something of a seminal marker of late capitalism’s kaleidoscopic uneven development. The city is the locus of an ever expanding technocracy, accelerated finance capital, American government and military structures, one of the largest American regions of foreign capital, along with massive flows of immigration, unemployment, dilapidated and densely populated minority neighborhoods, and the largest concentration of homeless people in the country (Soja, *PG* 208-217). A brief comment on the historical growth of Los Angeles provides a clear conception of the shift in capitalism’s growth towards sectoral uneven development and extracting surplus-value through innovations in the means of production. Beginning in the 1920s, agriculture and oil, the production of raw materials, were Los Angeles’ first sources of accumulation. By the 1930s, Los Angeles had become industrialized and extracted more surplus-profit through manufacturing (Soja, *PG* 191). Today, however, a large portion of the city’s accumulation comes from technology firms (Soja, *PG* 210).³¹ We can think of *Blade Runner* (Scott) as the logical extension of this historical trajectory of extracting surplus-profit through placing more and more emphasis on technological innovation. For

³¹ Soja gives us a concise summary of Los Angeles’ growth in stating, “Since 1900, there may be no other place where the upheavals associated with capitalist centralization have developed more rapidly or shamelessly” (190-191).

within the film's futuristic diegetic Los Angeles, giant corporations use human-like robots, or "replicants," as their means of production. The fictitious giant corporation that owns and exploits these replicants is the powerful Tyrell Corporation, located somewhere around downtown Los Angeles. The film's plot centers on a handful of the Tyrell replicants who go on a mission of rebellion and vengeance against their creators by leaving the off world colonies in which they work in order to return to earth, more specifically Los Angeles, so that they can meet their makers and expand their lifespan. In doing so the plot becomes a narrative of searching and twisting through the various facets of a postindustrial Los Angeles. For also on the other end of the narrative spectrum we have Rick Deckard, the reluctant Blade Runner (police officer) whom has been forced to find the rogue replicants and "retire" (code for kill) them. Thus we have two different parties, one replicants and the other Deckard, each existing, which is to say searching, on the spatial plane of immanence of a Los Angeles constituted by the kaleidoscopic nature of sectoral uneven development.

Before jumping into my own analysis of the ways in which *Blade Runner* figures a spatial plane of immanence I first want to spend some time working through some of the ways in which the film has previously been discussed in relationship to late capitalism because I believe that buried within these other texts lie an understanding of the film as that which uses space to attack movement and time. *Blade Runner* has become something of a seminal marker for cinema's relationship to late capitalism, as it has been written on extensively both within and beyond the field of film studies for the ways in which it emphatically represents and captures the most popular themes of this new phase

of capitalism (which in the following articles many of the authors refer to as postmodernism instead of late capitalism). Giuliana Bruno's instructive article, fittingly titled "Ramble City: Postmodernism and 'Blade Runner'" is heavily indebted to Jameson's interpretation of postmodernism, as throughout she delineates the ways in which the film accentuates the most prominent postmodern symptoms such as pastiche, schizophrenia, and the simulacra and simulation. In Wong Kin Yuen's article "On the edge of Spaces: 'Blade Runner', 'Ghost in the Shell', and Hong Kong's Cityscape" he relates the science fiction film to the architecture and spatiality of Hong Kong's urbanscape in the late 1990s and early 2000s in order to delineate the tendencies of multiculturalism in postmodernity (21). In Timothy Yu's "Oriental Cities, Postmodern Futures: *Naked Lunch*, *Blade Runner*, and *Neuromancer*" he turns to *Blade Runner* to highlight the ways in which postmodernism is both greatly influenced by Asian cultures, and because of this it suffers from racial anxiety, which fosters an oppression of minorities by white, principally American, structures (48).³² Even Harvey turns to the film in his book on postmodernism, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry Into the Origins of Cultural Change*, in order to accentuate the dystopic features of the film's depiction of Los Angeles.³³ Central to each of these analyses is an understanding of space

³² Yu summarizes his argument on Western cultures oppression of Eastern cultures in postmodernity in stating, "In their attempts to localize the operations of global capitalism, these portraits of the postmodern city expose the extent to which the imagining of postmodernity has been grounded in Orientalism and racial anxiety. While these urban fantasies portray fears of postmodernity through the threat of a reverse colonization of the West by the East, at times they also propose in response a recolonization that reasserts the hegemony of the white Western subject" (48).

³³ In his chapter titled "Time and Space in Postmodern Cinema" Harvey states, "The Los Angeles to which the replicants return is hardly a utopia. The flexibility of the replicants' capacity to labour in outer space is, as we have recently come to expect, matched in Los Angeles by a decrepit landscape of deindustrialization and post-industrial decay. Empty warehouses and abandoned industrial plant drip with leaking rain. Mist

as an ominous force that fosters oppression and racism, a force that disrupts the temporal links between the past, present, and future, and a force that, in its kaleidoscopic nature, turns the urban realm into a dystopian milieu of waste and excessive consumerism.

Vivian Sobchack's analysis of *Blade Runner* in her concise and significant article "Cities on the Edge of Time: The Urban Science Fiction Film" falls in line with the aforementioned literature in that she is primarily interested in the film's spatiality. Furthermore, her work with the film aligns more directly with my own methodology in that she pivots the film in relationship to a historical trajectory of the ways in which cinema looks at space. To be more specific, her article creates a historical trajectory of cinematic images of the city, mostly from science fiction films, dating between the 1930s (the films in the 1930s she references are actually films of the fantasy genre)³⁴ to the 1980s in order to describe the ways in which the "transformation of contemporary urban experience" changes throughout history (5).³⁵ Sobchack outlines four different time periods, each of which represents the city in a distinct manner. With its emphasis on the vertical and majestic skyscrapers, cinema of the 1930s echoes the early modernist themes of futurism by representing the city as the site of the new, of "aspiration" and

swirls, rubbish piles up, infrastructures are in a state of disintegration that makes the pot-holes and failing bridges of contemporary New York look mild by comparison" (310).

³⁴ Sobchack points this fact out in her article when she states that the science fiction genre did not begin until the 1950s (6).

³⁵ At the beginning of her article Sobchack states, "...the SF film concretely 'real-izes' the imaginary and the speculative in the visible spectacle of a concrete image. Thus, it could be argued that because it offers us the most *explicitly poetic* figuration of the literal grounds of contemporary urban existence, the SF city and its concrete 'realization' in American cinema also offers the most appropriate representational grounds for a phenomenological history of the spatial and temporal transformation of the city as it has been culturally experienced from the 1950s (when the American SF film first emerged as a genre) to the present (in which the genre enjoys unprecedented popularity)" (4-5).

“transcendence” (8).³⁶ In the cinema of the 1950s Sobchack turns to disaster films such as *When Worlds Collide* (Maté) and *On the Beach* (Kramer) to show that cinema’s representation of the city during this historical time period was one of depicting the urban realm as a locus of destruction and “emptiness” (11).³⁷ It should not be too much of a surprise to note here the similarities between this understanding of the city and the any-spaces-whatever of time-image regime’s connection to spaces of rubble and emptiness. In the cinema of the 1970s Sobchack then goes on to show that here cinema now represents the city as a claustrophobic place of overpopulation (13).³⁸ Finally, Sobchack’s last historical marker is the 1980s and here she turns to *Blade Runner*, along with *Repo Man* (Cox), to show that in late capitalism cinema represents the city as a “junkyard” of backwards euphoria. Here, the city remains a crowded and suffocating realm, but unlike the 1970s, this phenomenon is celebrated through obsessive consumerism (Sobchack 14).³⁹ Thus, if we look at Sobchack’s overall historical trajectory, we can note that within her work lies an evolution of space as that which grows from fostering movement, futurity, and “aspiration” to a realm of emptiness and destruction, a realm that she

³⁶ Here, Sobchack turns to the films *King Kong* (Cooper, 1933) and *The Wizard of Oz* (Fleming, 1939) (7-8).

³⁷ Sobchack contrasts cinema’s representation of the city in the 1950s from that of the 1930s in stating, “The 1950s I am describing here is not about resolution, but about *dissolution*. Its poetic reverberations have nothing to do with aspiration and ascendancy and everything to do with, as Sontag (1965, 44) puts it, ‘the fantasy of living through one’s own death and more, the death of cities, the destruction of humanity itself’” (10-11).

³⁸ Here Sobchack turns to the film *Soylent Green* (Fleischer, 1973) and states, “This is a New York City that no longer aspires, but suffocates and expires. Visible emphasis is not on the height of buildings but their baseness. Verticality is no longer significant – and emphasis on the city’s horizontal dimension stresses its limitation, not its openness” (13).

³⁹ Sobchack summarizes this phenomenon in stating, “In a complete reversal, the imaginary SF city’s lowness, baseness, horizontality, its crowdedness, overpopulatedness, and overstuffedness are celebrated and aestheticized. That is, the old imaginary and centered SF metropolis is totally resigned to its ruination, its displacement to its own edges, its concrete transformation from city as center to city as inner, from aspiring city to city dump” (14).

describes as “nostalgic – always already fixed on an unrecoverable past rather than on a future that has not yet occurred” (11), and then finally to an understanding of space as dominating, contradictory, and intense. This is perhaps a good place for me to venture away from these important analyses of *Blade Runner* and directly carry the film into my own discussion of Deleuzian cinema and the plane of immanence, a place that, to my knowledge, the film has yet to be taken. To look at it another way, I will now move away from analyzing the film’s representational relationship to postmodernism and understanding of time as history, and, instead, turn towards the ways in which *Blade Runner* figures the body’s relationship to space and understands time as the realm of affect. Throughout my analysis I will continue to indirectly pull from these previous readings of the film, but rely on them only so much as to point towards the ways in which they, unconsciously, underline a plane of immanence in which space forces bodies into states of intense-searching situations.

The structuration of *Blade Runner*’s spatial plane of immanence is one of a homogeneous spatiality constituted by contradictory connections. Bruno aptly describes the film’s incongruous milieu in stating, “In the postindustrial city the explosion of urbanization, melting of the futuristic high-tech look into an intercultural scenario, recreates the third world inside the first” (66). Throughout the film we move rapidly in and out of urban ghettos and slums populated by minorities and working class individuals of various ethnicities (Chinese, Japanese, Egyptian, German, Spanish, and English), crowded street vendors, the homeless, garbage that swallows sidewalks and overflows onto the streets, and pollution and smoke that hangs in the air. Here we can call to mind

Sobchack's definition of the city in late capitalism as a "junkyard" (14). Rundown historical landmarks turned into residential spaces, high-rise apartments made of metal and stone, a proliferation of shopping centers ensconced by large glass windows, hybrid techno-clubs and early twentieth century burlesques, massive skyscrapers holding the headquarters of global corporations and governmental bodies, and postmodern-esque futuristic Egyptian pyramids made of steel and coated with thousands of light bulbs, along with an interior complete with Greco-Roman columns make up some of the various architectural structures of this Los Angeles. Furthermore, transportation here further convolutes this spatial plane of immanence as the streets are crammed with a claustrophobic mixture of vehicles of all sizes and masses of walking pedestrians always carrying umbrellas to block the never-ending rain, and the skies above become topographic layers of flying cars, floating billboards, tips of fire breathing skyscrapers, and magnanimous blimps. What Bruno labels as an "excess of scenography" (67), and Sobchack refers to as a city that is "literally exhausted – generating that strange blend of hysteria and euphoria that comes with utter fatigue" (15), we can translate as an exemplar of the intense and schizophrenic nature of this kaleidoscopic spatiality.

The diverse facets of the film's spatiality are anything but fragmented and separated from one another. They are, on the other hand, the contradictory realms that make up the plane's single spatiality, and as the film progresses it consciously connects these assorted pockets. Harvey's insights on the film are telling for the way in which he accentuates the connectivity within the futuristic Los Angeles:

Not only has the ‘third-world’ come to Los Angeles even more than at present, but signs of third world systems of labour organization and informal labour practices are everywhere. The scales for a genetically produced snake are produced in a tiny workshop, and human eyes are produced in another (both run by Orientals), indicating intricate relations of sub-contracting between highly disaggregated firms as well as with the Tyrell Corporation itself. (310-311)

These practically incomprehensible connections become all the more evident as we follow the replicants and Deckard on their searches throughout this chaotic milieu of sectoral uneven development.

The replicant’s search, principally the leader-replicant Roy, is a climb through the intense hierarchies of power within the film’s spatial plane of immanence, as Yu points out, “...*Blade Runner*’s cityscape is organized vertically, built upon the contrast of the street level (whose denizens the director characterizes as “Spanish,” “Oriental,” and “Punk . . . some louts” [Kerman, “Technology” 17]) to the aerial pathways of the police hovercraft” (54). We first meet Roy on a crowded and rainy street within one of the downtown Los Angeles slums where he is waiting with Leon, another replicant, outside the latter’s dilapidated hotel room. The first stop on Roy’s search for the CEO of the Tyrell Corporation, Tyrell himself, is within this same slum where Leon lives. Just down the street from Leon’s hotel room is a small workshop where a private contractor and engineer (Chew) builds eyes for the Tyrell corporation’s replicants. Chew is by no means a prosperous and wealthy individual. As we learn throughout the film, the more

prosperous individuals living within downtown Los Angeles reside in the city's taller buildings. For instance, Deckard lives in a high-rise apartment building (his room is on the 97th floor). Moreover, the even wealthier and powerful reside either in some kind of Los Angeles suburb, as does Tyrell, or live in the off-world colonies. This is all the more reason to again bring up Sobchack's understanding of cities in science fiction films of the 1980s as, not just a junkyard, but also as a city that has displaced its traditional centers of power: "...the old, imaginary and centered SF metropolis is totally resigned to its ruination, its displacement to its own edges, its concrete transformation from city as center to city as inner, from aspiring city to city dump" (14). The physically lower levels of the city's downtown region are the home of the underprivileged of all kinds: the poor, the homeless, the unemployed, and the sick, in short, all the different faces of the industrial reserve army. Chew, the eye engineer, is no exception, and it is worth pointing out that he is one of the members of the various ethnic minorities that reside in these lower levels of Los Angeles. His workshop, and probably residence, reeks deprivation as it looks more like an underground dungeon than a scientific laboratory. The tiny space is suffocating, the air temperature is below zero, and steel and concrete walls prevent one from conceiving the interior space's connections to the external world. It is no surprise then that Yu describes the replicants journey in the film in stating, "In this reassertion of racial hierarchy, the basis of the economy in the Orient is repressed as the replicants ascend the hierarchy of power" (58).

The next stop on Roy's search takes him to J.F. Sebastian, a genetic designer for the Tyrell Corporation, which means that Sebastian designs the minds of the replicants.

Like the Chew, Sebastian lives in downtown Los Angeles as he is also one of the underprivileged labourers of the Tyrell Corporation. But unlike Chew, Sebastian's work seems to be a more highly skilled labour than making the replicant's eyes (perhaps in the future making eyes is a pretty straightforward task, as Chew tells Roy, "I just make eyes."), and, it is important to note that, Sebastian is a white male whereas Chew is an Asian minority. The main reason why Sebastian is stuck in downtown Los Angeles is because he suffers from a genetic disease that causes him to age faster than normal. This, of course, is to the advantage of the Tyrell Corporation as it allows the company to extract more labour from lower socioeconomic regions. Because of Sebastian's more skilled labour and, again channeling Yu's insights on race and hierarchies of power, his race, Sebastian's living space is more inviting and comfortable than Chew's cramped workspace-residence (58).⁴⁰ Sebastian lives in the now abandoned and rundown Bradbury Building and is therefore able to put some vertical distance between himself and the lower levels of downtown Los Angeles, as he lives in the upper floors of the old historical building.

The next and final stop on Roy's search takes him outside downtown Los Angeles and into, what I can only assume to be, the most affluent Los Angeles suburb where Tyrell resides in one of the aforementioned postmodern steel Egyptian-Greco-Roman pyramids. Thus Roy's search ends with him reaching the highest geographical point of Los Angeles, as the pyramids are not only located just outside downtown Los Angeles, but also tower

⁴⁰ Here Yu states, "Though Chew himself exist at street level and cannot move vertically, his assistance is required for the replicants to gain access to their white mediator, J.F. Sebastian, who can. (Chew works on the ground floor, while Sebastian's security clearance is necessary for Roy to ascend in the elevator to Tyrell's suite)" (58).

above the city's interior core and in doing so they accentuate the power they hold over the kaleidoscopic spatiality that they have created.

Roy's existence on this kaleidoscopic plane of immanence is one of an intense-searching situation. The primary force that opposes and obstructs Roy's movements is space and nothing but space. For as we learn throughout the film, Roy is a superior body: He is the leader of the replicants, his physical capabilities are unmatched by any human, and he is an intelligent being who can outsmart Tyrell in a chess match. But on this socio-geographical patchwork of contradictory connections, Roy is reduced to a searcher trapped within the maze of sectoral uneven development. Rather than displaying his physical prowess throughout the film, Roy's journey on this spatiality is one in which physicality takes a back seat to asking questions. When confronting Chew, his first order of business is to ask how he can get to Tyrell. The eye engineer then leads Roy to Sebastian, where Roy's primary purpose is again to inquire about the locale of Tyrell. After continuously probing Sebastian for answers, the genetic designer takes Roy to Tyrell. Once he finally confronts his maker, Roy's questions now concern ways in which he can increase his expiring lifespan. He is now searching for time.

Blade Runner's spatial plane of immanence not only takes control over movement; it also macerates time. Here time as the realm of futurity and past disappears. Roy and the other replicants are expiring and schizophrenic bodies, as Bruno says, "Replicants are condemned to a life composed only of a present tense; they have neither past nor memory. There is for them no conceivable future" (70). As we learn throughout the film, the replicants have no future because of their four-year life span, and they lack a

subjective past, as instead of living through childhood memories, the replicants interiority consists of nothing but manufactured implants. Bruno goes on to describe this state becoming in turning to Jameson's schizophrenia: "This kind of relationship to the present is typical of schizophrenia. Jameson notes, in fact, that 'as temporal continuity breaks down, the experience of the present becomes powerfully, overwhelmingly vivid and material.' The world comes before the schizophrenic with heightened intensity" (Bruno 70). This intensity is a direct symptom of a contradictory plane of immanence in which space fragments the temporal realm of affect. For when Roy encounters these other bodies throughout his search for Tyrell he is not only reduced to asking questions, but the affections themselves between these two centers of indetermination (Roy v. Chew, Roy v. Sebastian, and Roy v. Tyrell) on the spatial plane of immanence are also fragmented into affections without reflections. Deleuze defines affect in stating, "It is this combination of a reflecting, immobile unity and of intensive expressive movements which constitutes the affect" (*CI* 87). On this contradictory spatiality, affect has been fractured in affections of only intensity. Each of the three separate stops on Roy's search ends with him killing the other bodies he encounters: Chew, J.F. Sebastian, and Tyrell all die at the hands of Roy. With the possible exception of Tyrell, these murders are not actions of Roy's free will. They are actions created by the contradictory and schizophrenic nature of sectoral uneven development. The expiring replicant, the poor eye engineer, and the sick genetic designer are three centers of indetermination, each exploited by the Tyrell corporation and brought together by the contradictory connections of the film's spatial plane of immanence where the encounters themselves between these

different bodies become encounters of contradiction. Space governing movement and fragmenting time into affects of pure intensity.

Contradiction and intensity is also that which governs Deckard's dangerous search for the replicants, a search that has been forced upon him by his former boss (Inspector Bryant) who reminds Deckard that, "If your not cop, your little people" when he initially tries to deny the inspectors orders. Take for example, Deckard's pursuit and encounter with Zhora, a replicant whom masks as a stripper and resides in the heart of the suffocating downtown slums. The encounter between these two bodies first takes place within a backroom of the cabaret where Zhora works as the snake-garnishing stripper. Violence initially lies idle in the background of the encounter between the reluctant blade runner without a choice and the expiring replicant. Deckard first plays the role of cunning detective and imposter as he masks as a member of a federation representing American artists in order to gain further access into Zhora's private dwelling. At the other end of the spectrum, Zhora immediately comes off as extremely capable, clever, and intimidating: Her responses to Decakard's repeated questioning are curt and blunt, she uses her pet snake as a means to accentuate her hard demeanor, and she uses her sexuality to make her male counterpoint vulnerable. It isn't long though until violence awakens and intensity intrudes upon the encounter. Zhora distracts Deckard by asking him to assist her with her wardrobe, which then allows her to abruptly attack the combating body by first pinning him to the ground and then choking him. Other bodies then enter the backroom and Zhora has no choice but to flee from the cabaret and into the claustrophobic and rainy streets of downtown Los Angeles.

Outside in the midst of this schizophrenic spatiality the intensity heightens as space intruders more and more on these encountering bodies by turning them into animals who frantically flee, chase, and hide. On this pursuit and flee through the crowded downtown streets, Deckard and Zhora lose their bearings, fall over the masses of other bodies in the rain while trying to move in between and around them. Deckard climbs onto a moving bus. Zhora scrambles over the tops of cars. The camera abandons its fixed frame and shifts into a formless handheld frame. Deckard thoughtlessly waves his gun about in the midst of hundreds of pedestrians and then suddenly shoots Zhora dead, thus forcing her body to crash through a series of large glass windows of a shopping center.

Both Zhora and Deckard are bodies running out time. On this spatial plane of immanence constituted by contradiction, one body must eliminate the other. Time has been pushed down into affections of pure intensity. Bodies become violent animals. At the end of the film when Roy realizes that his time nearly up and his body is expiring he becomes more lethal and erratic. He taunts Deckard as a predator taunts its prey, he smashes his body through brick walls, in which at one point he even declares “that was irrational”, he howls into the night, and he sheds his clothes and gallops in and out of the different rooms of the old Bradbury Building. In this world of contradiction, time as the realm of thought, experience, and subjectivity becomes replaced by intense violence.

In his seminal work *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre, who is perhaps the most important scholar of space, describes the world of global capitalism as one constituted by contradictory space:

Such is the context of an unfolding ‘economic’ process which no longer answers to classical political economy and which indeed defies all the computations of the economists. ‘Real property’ (along with ‘construction’) [which is to say space] is no longer a secondary form of circulation, no longer the auxiliary and backward branch of industrial and financial capitalism that it once was. Instead it has a leading role, albeit in an *uneven* way, for its significance is liable to vary according to country, time or circumstance. The law of unevenness of growth and development, so far from becoming obsolete, is becoming worldwide in its application – or, more precisely, is presiding over the globalization of a world market.

(335)

Central among these spatial contradictions for Lefebvre is a contradiction between space and time, a contradiction between capitalism as a global force and affect. In turning to Lefebvre’s conceptual apparatus we may be able to expand our articulation of the unique locus of time and affect on the spatial plane of immanence of late capitalism.

3. The Spatial Trialectic and The Spatial Plane of Immanence

3.1 *American Psycho and Space's Serial Murdering of Time*

I have been talking a lot about space: Space and the cinema, space and late capitalism, space and the plane of immanence, space and affect. It is impossible to conceive of space without thinking about time and movement. This we all know. Gilles Deleuze's understanding of the cinema is essentially a delineation of the ways in which the cinema adjusts and readjusts how it figures time, space, and movement throughout its evolution with the world. In the prewar cinema, movement governs time and space. In the immediate postwar cinema, time governs space and movement. The historical trajectory that I have been carving out throughout this thesis certainly implies that in late capitalism cinema now makes space that which trumps all. In a sense this is true, but it is also a reductionist claim, as it overlooks one of the most important and novel qualities of this era of cinema. The movement-image regime simply pushes time to the periphery of its plane of immanence. It turns time into an "indirect representation", and it leans on determined and hodological spaces to celebrate movement (Deleuze, *C1* ix).⁴¹ In the time-image regime movement and space are at the complete service of the dominant realm of temporality, as "false movement" and any-spaces-whatever are some of the most important means by which movement and space reinforce time as the main mode of figuration on this temporal plane of immanence (Deleuze, *C2* xi).⁴² These are all, in a

⁴¹ In the preface to *Cinema 1* Deleuze states, "Their [the perception-image, affection-image, and action-image] distribution certainly does determine a representation of time, but it must be noted that time remains an object of an indirect representation in so far as it depends on montage and derives from movement-images" (ix).

⁴² In the preface to *Cinema 2* Deleuze states, "And thanks to this loosening of the sensory-motor linkage, it is time, 'a little time in the pure state', which rises up to the surface of the screen. Time ceases to be derived from the movement, it appears in itself and itself gives rise to *false movements*" (xi).

sense, and act of moving around or reshuffling of time, space and movement on these respective planes of immanence so as to allow one of these three entities to be the central mode of figuration. The plane of immanence of late capitalism differs from these preceding cinematic regimes in that it changes the relationship between these three modes of figuration from one of association to one of contradiction. The American cinema of late capitalism is a cinema that, for the first time, works primarily through a contradiction between space and time, a contradiction between capitalism as a global force and affect, a contradiction between the spatial realm of control and power and the temporal realm of passively experiencing and living in space. Inherent to the spatial plane of immanence of late capitalism is a violent struggle between time and space, a struggle in which space always wins by forcefully repressing time and pinning it down into fits of violence and intensity.

What could be the most over the top, but also one of the most instructive and insightful figurations of this violent contradiction between the spatial realm of control and the temporal realm of passively living in space comes in Mary Harron's *American Psycho*. For this is a film that, above all, figures the temporal realm of affect as that which is under attack by space. The film about a yuppie stockbroker who moonlights as a serial killer and resides within the homogenous upper class of Manhattan works through the contradictions between space and time by opposing the literal and physical higher realms of the city against Manhattan's lowest terrains. The two-sided nature of the film's protagonist (Patrick) plays a vital role in figuring this contradiction. On the one hand, Patrick is the epitome of power and wealth. He works in a skyscraper on Wall Street as a

stockbroker, he lives in the upper floors of the lavish American Gardens Building on West 81st Street, he hangs out at yacht clubs, dines in five star restaurants, and wears the most expensive suits that money can buy. On the other hand, Patrick is a murderous psychopath. He often spends his nights pooling within the cracks of Manhattan's homogeneity in order to seek out victims whom will satisfy his insane urges. His victims are, more often than not, people of the sub-proletariat, principally the poor, the homeless, and prostitutes. In short, Patrick's alternative lifestyles expose the contradictions between dominating space and dominated time. During the day Patrick resides within spaces of power, with the most emphatic space being his upper floor office, a space that allows him to literally tower above Manhattan's spatiality. But at night, Patrick searches for prey within the lowest levels of the city's layout. These are Manhattan's most destitute facets: Dark alleys, street corners exuding blight, and urban caves under bridges where pollution creates a low-lying mist. On this homogeneous spatiality of the city, these are the temporal fissures of experiencing and living in the dominated spatiality of Manhattan.

Throughout the film Patrick frequently visits these temporal fissures in order to quench his murderous desires. Upon choosing his prey, Patrick then takes them back to his home, the place in which the contradictions between space and time, the high and low, control and impotence, collide in the most intense manner. The bourgeois apartments in which Patrick resides gives us something like a paradoxical take on the temporal realm of living in space. In other words, the spaces in which Patrick resides are the inverse to the lowly spaces in which his victims of the poor live in. To begin with, the affluent apartments in which Patrick inhabits are held in high-rise structures that tower

above the city streets, thus making it impossible to conceptualize such spaces as passivity.⁴³ Instead, it is more accurate to group these towering homes among the other skyscrapers that control the city. Furthermore, within these high-rises the omnipresence of the commodity fetish all but erases time and affect. Take Patrick's apartment for example. This cold space is filled with all the trappings of a bourgeois-yuppie. Sleek and black furniture, stainless-steel kitchen appliances, hardwood floors, white walls, panoramic windows, and sliding glass doors constitute the bones of his living space. Moreover, an in-home tanning bed, a wardrobe worth millions, all of the newest technological devices, and a plethora of cosmetic products fill in the apertures of the skeletal structure. In short, both Patrick's lifestyle as a stockbroker-serial killer, and his paradoxical living space further contribute to the city's assault on time.

American Psycho's Manhattan is, above all, a spatiality that represses time. It forces it down into cracks and fissures that lie on the city's lowest levels: On street corners, under bridges, in alleys. And within these spaces lie those who passively experience space. Patrick takes us to these dominated realms on his violent searches. Once he has lured his prey out from these fractures of time, he takes them up into his own space of power where time moves from being repressed into alleys and street corners to being pulverized into fits of violence and intensity. Simply put, within these icy aboveground lairs exuding with wealth and materialism the affection-image becomes fragmented into images of pure intensity, as here bodies become violent searching and fleeing animals.

⁴³ As Patrick says in his opening monologue, "I live in the American Gardens Building on West 81st Street, on the 11th floor."

The scene in which Christy desperately attempts to escape from Patrick within one of these high-rise apartments is vital. To begin with, Christy embodies one of Patrick's typical victims, as she is a prostitute who comes from one of the lowly fractal street corners of Manhattan. While riding in the back of his private limo, Patrick picks Christy up in what appears to be a wasteland-outskirt of some kind of power plant. He takes her back to one of the bourgeois apartments where the commodity fetish dominates the encounters between Patrick, Christy, and a third woman named Elizabeth. Elizabeth asks Christy about what college she went to, whether or not she summers in South Hampton, and where she works. Christy tells Patrick that this apartment is nicer than his other one, and Patrick laces white wine with narcotics. Elizabeth asks Patrick about his job, talks about her college years, and Patrick adoringly listens to and discusses pop music. These superficial interactions are, in other words, interactions of space. Interactions in which space and materialism block out time and affect. Space pins time down until it can only find a means of expression through horrific violence. On this spatial plane, the affection-image arises when Patrick attacks Elizabeth within the bedroom. It then grows with Christy promptly transforming into a fleeing animal, desperately searching for a way out of Patrick's hostile dwelling. Christy runs out of the bedroom and down a hall. The camera shifts into handheld to figure the chaos of the situation. She turns left and opens the door at the end of the hall to find that it is a closet filled with two bloodied corpses. She runs down another hall and enters a room where more dead bodies are sprawled across the ground. She attempts to double back, but now Patrick is pursuing her and he is armed with a chainsaw. She runs down another hall only

to find more blood and bodies on a bathroom floor. All the while a mobile camera and unstable frame continue to figure this state of confused searching, space attacking affect. Patrick catches up to her. She escapes his grasp and exits the apartment. She flees down a corridor, screaming and pounding on the neighbors' doors. She then scrambles down a staircase where Patrick violently ends the pursuit.

The film's climactic sequence figures the ways in which space cuts the affection-image into images of pure intensity by pitting Patrick's scrambling body against the entire spatial layout of Manhattan. At the film's climax, Patrick becomes so overwhelmed by his bourgeois-yuppie lifestyle that he transforms from a serial killer to a fleeing animal, an intense-searcher. Rather than spending his nights cruising in his limo for victims, Patrick finds himself delusional and frantically scrambling on foot in and out of Manhattan's streets, alleys, and skyscrapers. This night of chaos begins when Patrick shoots an innocent pedestrian in an ATM vestibule, and then promptly flees out onto the street as the cops are now pursuing him. He frantically tries breaking into cars, he runs down an alley, and then finds himself in a shootout with a mob of police officers. A car explodes. Patrick now loses his bearings and as he does so the camera loses its stability. He is now completely at the mercy of space. He runs towards a high-rise apartment building, thinking it is the building in which he resides. He enters the main floor lobby only to realize that he is in the wrong building. He shoots both the security guard and a janitor. He exits the building and is back outside in the midst of the Manhattan skyscrapers. Here the film then cuts to a breathtaking image that unequivocally captures the ominous and enveloping character of space on this plane of immanence. Through a

slightly low angle position with a long-shot, long-take, and deep focus photography we see a miniscule Patrick in the lower level of the frame scrambling across the pavement like an ant, and in the midground and background five different brightly lit skyscrapers tower above his impotent body.

Patrick's search continues the next day. He returns to Paul Allen's apartment, one of the apartments in which he had been murdering victims, including Christy and Elizabeth, and storing their corpses. Upon entering the apartment he is shocked to find that the entire interior is covered in fresh white paint, and a real estate agent is showing it to potential homeowners. Patrick looks in one of the closets and instead of dead bodies he finds buckets of paint. The real estate agent confronts him and orders him to leave and not to come back. Confused, Patrick stumbles out of the apartment that just nights before was one of his murderous dens, but is now completely whitewashed. As one character says earlier in the film, "People just disappear. The earth just opens up and swallows them." On this spatial plane of immanence, people no longer have insides. It is not just Patrick who is insane. It is Reagan's façade as a "harmless old codger," and it is the rest of the Manhattan powerful, the realm of controlling space, who have been cleaning up after Patrick's hideous crimes all along.

3.2 Bringing Lefebvre into the Conversation

I now want to turn to Henri Lefebvre's work on both space and time in order to begin diving more directly into this space-time contradiction, this contradiction between controlling space and being dominated by space, that is so crucial to the spatial plane of

immanence. For one of the salient aspects of Lefebvre's spatial trialectic is a struggle between space and time. This contradiction plays a central role in his understanding of the ways in which capitalism continues to grow and create fractures within the world. Let us turn to one of Lefebvre's more emphatic delineations of this space-time opposition:

With the advent of modernity time has vanished from social space. It is recorded solely on the measuring-instruments, on clocks, that are as isolated and functionally specialized as this time itself. Lived time loses its form and its social interest – with the exception, that is, of time spent working. Economic space subordinates time to itself; political space expels it as threatening and dangerous (to power). The primacy of the economic and above all of the political implies the supremacy of space over time. It is thus possible that the error concerning space that we have been discussing actually concerns time more directly, more intimately, than it does space, time being even closer to us, and more fundamental. Our time, then, this most essential part of lived experience, this greatest good of all goods, is no longer visible to us, no longer intelligible. It cannot be constructed. It is consumed, exhausted, and that is all. It is concealed in space, hidden under a pile of debris to be disposed of as soon as possible; after all, rubbish is a pollutant.

This manifest expulsion of time is arguably one of the hallmarks of modernity. . . . Time may have been promoted to the level of ontology by

the philosophers [Deleuze is certainly one of the most adamant of these time-obsessed philosophers], but it has been murdered by society. (95-96)

I believe that this space-time conflict, space's serial murdering of time, reaches its ultimate climax in our contemporary historical situation of late capitalism. This is so principally because of the global reach that capitalism attains in late capitalism.

Globalization gives more life to space through its uprooting of traditional centers of accumulation and proliferation of new centers. Lefebvre tells us that the concept of centrality is essentially a contradiction between space as an abundant entity and space as scarcity. Space as scarcity refers to marking off and creating "restricted" areas of space that are only available to those with power and wealth. These areas of space are not simply places where accumulation in the strictest sense occurs; they are also, as Lefebvre says, "centres of decision making" (333). The abundance of space refers to the potentiality of space. This is not the space where decision-making is made. It is, however, space available to and created by those with power, but it is, at the same time, always a little out of reach and thus constantly susceptible to change (Lefebvre 333).⁴⁴ In a powerful statement, Lefebvre asserts that what makes our present society different from that which came before us is that "centrality now aspires to be *total*" (332). Thus this contradiction between abundant space (the lowly terrains of *American Psycho*'s Manhattan) and scarce space (the film's skyscrapers and high-rise apartments) permeates throughout the entire world creating a global structure constituted by an explosion of

⁴⁴ Lefebvre delineates the contradiction between shortage of space and abundant space in stating, "Shortage of space has original and new characteristics as compared with other kinds of shortages, whether ancient or modern. In so far as it results from a historical process, it occurs spontaneously, yet it is sustained, and often sought and organized, by centrally made decisions. It introduces a contradiction between past and possible future abundance on the one hand and actually reigning scarcity on the other" (333).

centers of accumulation, power, and decision-making, and diverse areas of exploitation, manipulation, and potentiality. This is, in short, the kaleidoscopic world of sectoral uneven development, a world that is simultaneously homogeneous (space as abundant) and fragmented (space as scarce). Cinema thus follows suit and adapts to globalization by shifting space from the realm of the passive to the realm of the active. It replaces the fragmented temporal plane of immanence of the any-space-whatever with a homogeneous spatiality constituted by the convoluted and contradictory world structure of total centrality. Lefebvre tells us that,

Knowledge, consciousness and social practice may thus all be seen to share the *centre*. There is no ‘reality’ without a concentration of energy, without a focus or core – nor, therefore, without the dialectic: centre-periphery, accretion-dissipation, condensation-radiation, glomeration-saturation, concentration-eruption, implosion-explosion. What is the ‘subject’? A momentary centre. The ‘object’? Likewise. The body? A focusing of active (productive) energies. The city? The urban sphere? Ditto. (399)

Centrality and contradiction make up the spatial plane of immanence. This is a plane of immanence where centers of indetermination, lived bodies, conflict with and become dominated by the city and the urban sphere, by violent buildings and structures of control, by “spatial practice” and “representations of space”. Bringing Lefebvre’s spatial trialectic into the spatial plane of immanence is one of the keys to identifying the ways in which the cinema of late capitalism works through an intense struggle between space and time.

The overall agenda of Lefebvre's seminal work, *The Production of Space*, is anything but straightforward. On the one hand, the book is a critique against modern philosophy and its obsession with time, binaries, the dialectic, and misreadings and applications of Marxist thought. On the other hand, the book can be read as something of a history of the ways in which the production of space has changed over the course of the world as it moves from one mode of production to another (Lefebvre 46).⁴⁵ This is the movement from 'absolute space' (Absolute space is similar to determined space in that it is space rooted to nature and humanity, space where humans rely on nature to create organic social relations.⁴⁶) to 'abstract space' (In abstract space organic social relations are replaced by social relations determined by accumulation and the commodity fetish. Here time is now at the complete service of production and as a result social relations become abstracted from nature.⁴⁷) then to 'contradictory space' (This is the space of class struggle, or the inherent contradictions of capitalism that create uneven development.⁴⁸) and then, hopefully, to 'differential space' (Differential space is space that is produced by the contradictions of space and comes after the "downfall" of abstract space. This space signals the end of a certain kind of relations of production, and the beginning of a new

⁴⁵ In the first chapter of *The Production of Space*, Lefebvre states, "It should be clear from the above that the passage from one mode of production to another is of the highest theoretical importance for our purposes, for it results from contradictions in the social relations of production which cannot fail to leave their mark on space and indeed to revolutionize it" (46).

⁴⁶ Lefebvre describes absolute space in stating, "Absolute space, religious and political in character, was a product of the bonds of consanguinity, soil and language..." (48).

⁴⁷ Here Lefebvre states, "It was during this time that productive activity (labour) became no longer one with the process of reproduction which perpetuated social life; but, in becoming independent of that process, labour fell prey to abstraction, whence abstract social labour" (49).

⁴⁸ Lefebvre shows that the contradictory nature of class struggle is that which combats abstract space: "Indeed, it is that struggle alone which prevents abstract space from taking over the whole planet and papering over all differences. Only the class struggle has the capacity to differentiate, to generate differences which are not intrinsic to economic growth *qua* strategy, 'logic' or 'system' – that is to say, differences which are neither induced by nor acceptable to that growth. The forms of the class struggle are now more varied than formerly. Naturally, they include the political action of minorities" (55).

kind of relations of production.⁴⁹) (Lefebvre 48-55). Or, the book can be read as something like a handbook or guide that gives us the conceptual tools (the “perceived,” “conceived,” and “lived”) for analyzing, and hopefully changing, our contemporary spatial moment. Edward Soja’s reading of Lefebvre should not go unmentioned here. As a political geographer, Soja’s understanding of Lefebvre’s work depends heavily on a deemphasizing of history. He uses Lefebvre’s work with space to develop a tripartite social theory that involves not only historicity and sociality, but also spatiality (Soja, *Thirdspace* 71).⁵⁰ In doing Soja is, in part, using Lefebvre as a means to remind readers, principally Marxists readers, to look at the present. This looking at the present is, in my opinion, one of the most important arguments of *The Production of Space*, and more specifically the spatial trialectic. Lefebvre’s own insistence on a trialectic, as opposed to a dialectic, derives heavily from his agenda of using space to create a unitary theory that bridges the gap between the mental and the physical (11). In addition to the mental and the physical, such a theory will also take into consideration the social. It will view the current society as an open, as opposed to closed, system that is wrought with violent contradictions and mechanisms beyond its own control, mechanisms that can be analyzed

⁴⁹ Here Lefebvre states, “Thus, despite – or rather because of – its negativity, abstract space carries within itself the seeds of a new kind of space. I shall call that new space ‘differential space’, because, inasmuch as abstract space tends towards homogeneity, towards the elimination of existing differences or peculiarities, a new space cannot be born (produced) unless it accentuates differences. It will also restore unity to what abstract space breaks up – to the functions, elements and moments of social practice” (52).

⁵⁰ In his book *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, Soja articulates this conceptual triad of historicity, sociality, and spatiality, (in this case, temporality, spatiality, and social being) in stating, “Just as space, time, and matter delineate and encompass the essential qualities of the physical world, spatiality, temporality, and social being can be seen as the abstract dimensions which together comprise all facets of human existence. More concretely specified, each of these abstract existential dimensions comes to life as a social construct which shapes empirically reality and is simultaneously shaped by it. Thus, the spatial order of human existence arises from the (social) production of space, the construction of human geographies that both reflect and configure being in the world” (25).

and used to change the current mode of production (Lefebvre 11).⁵¹ This unitary/spatial theory goes against traditional diachronic and dialectical critical theories that depend on binaries, oppositions, and “perfect systems” (Lefebvre 39). To put it another way, by bringing (social) space into the fold, Lefebvre demands that we turn our critical attention towards the present: “Yet this space is always, now and formerly, a *present* space, given as an immediate whole, complete with its associations and connections in their actuality. Thus production process and product present themselves as two inseparable aspects, not as two separable ideas” (Lefebvre 37). The spatial trialectic is a deemphasizing of the historical trajectory of dialectical Marxist thought, a reemphasizing of traditional contradictions, and, most importantly, a conceptualizing of new contradictions of capitalism.

Lefebvre gives us the tools to rethink the contradictions of capitalism in terms of space by breaking space apart into three different layers. These spatial layers are: Spatial practice (the perceived), Representations of space (the conceived), and Representational spaces (the lived). Identifying the differences and connections among the three layers of the spatial trialectic is more difficult than one may at first assume. Perhaps the best way to begin explaining these three facets of space is to point out the order in which Lefebvre describes them. In the first chapter of *The Production of Space* Lefebvre lists these spatial layers two times and both times he lists them in the following order: 1.) Spatial practice,

⁵¹ In one of Lefebvre’s more telling critiques of critical theory he states, “Some over-systematic thinkers oscillate between loud denunciations of capitalism and the bourgeoisie and their repressive institutions on the one hand, and fascination and unrestrained admiration on the other. They make society into the ‘object’ of a systematization which must be ‘closed’ to be complete; they thus bestow a cohesiveness it utterly lacks upon a totality which is in fact decidedly open – so open, indeed, that it must rely on violence to endure. The position of these systematizers is in any case self-contradictory: even if their claims had some validity they would be reduced to nonsense by the fact that the terms and concepts used to define the system must necessarily be mere tools of that system itself” (11).

2.) Representations of space, and 3.) Representational space (33 and 38-39).⁵² Soja's explication of these spatial layers is dependent on this ordering, for he "redescribes" spatial practice as "Firstspace," representations of space as "Secondspace," and representational space as "Thirdspace" (*Thirdspace* 66 – 68). The ordering of these layers moves from the objective to the subjective. Spatial practice describes space at its most practical level. Lefebvre explicates Spatial practice in stating, "The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space . . . From an analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space" (38). This is also the realm of what Lefebvre calls perceived space. This is so because spatial practice is space that we engage with without thinking about. In *American Psycho* this is simply the spatial layout of Manhattan, an understanding of space as nothing more than a physicality that we take for granted; it is space that we perceive without conceiving: "This materialized, socially produced, empirical space is described as *perceived* space, directly sensible and open, within limits, to accurate measurement and description" (Soja, *Thirdspace* 66). The second layer of space, representations of space, is space as conceived, conceptualized space. Lefebvre describes this space as "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artists with a scientific bent . . . This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production)" (38-39). Whereas spatial practice was a dead physical layout, representations of space is an understanding of space as that which can be used, molded, and manipulated by individuals holding positions of power. Under the historical process of capitalism, this layer of conceptualized space has become a space that dominates through, among other

⁵² Lefebvre actually foreshadows these three layers without providing the terminology on pages 8-9.

means, ideology, control, and surveillance (Soja, *Thirdspace* 67). In *American Psycho*, this quality of space is akin to the skyscrapers and other high-rise structures that tower above the city's spatial practice. Lefebvre describes representational space, the third layer of space, as space that is "passively experienced" by "users" and "inhabitants" (39). In *American Psycho* these are the lowly spaces in which the homeless, the poor, and prostitutes reside. Whereas representations of space refers to space as something thought about and dominating, representational space is an understanding of space as lived experience and being dominated. Furthermore, within this realm of space lies the locus of time and affect: "Representational space is alive: it speaks. It has an affective kernel or centre: Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time" (Lefebvre 42). To this list we could add the space under bridges, on street corners, and in dark alleys. Taken as a whole then, we can understand these three spatial layers as follows: First, perceiving the spatial layout itself; second, conceiving, molding, and controlling this spatial layout so as to maintain power and foster inequality; and third, living in and passively experiencing this spatial layout as that which dominates. Existing, or becoming, in social space is thus a tripartite experience of perceiving space, using space, and being dominated by space.

The interactions between these three spatial layers create a multitude of contradictions. Throughout *The Production of Space* Lefebvre enumerates on these contradictions, some of which include the contradiction between quantity and quality (352), the contradiction between homogeneous space and fragmented space (355), the

contradiction between exchange value and use value (356), the contradiction between the center and periphery (333), the contradiction between knowledge and power (358), the contradiction between surplus-value and enjoyment (359), and the contradiction between difference and repetition (370-371). Inherent to each of these contradictions is a struggle between space and time, a struggle that pits the physical layout of space and the control of space against the temporal realm of lived space. Take, for example, the contradiction between homogeneous space and fragmented space, and the contradiction between the center and periphery. For these are two sides of the same coin. On the one hand, we have space as an infinite and enveloping force. Here, Lefebvre even points to the ways in which a computer science program can accumulate an infinite amount of information concerning any facet of social space (355). On the other hand, the experience of living in space is one of being dominated by the division of labour. Uneven development determines where we live, where and how we travel through spatial practice, and how our bodies move in social space: “The ways in which space is thus carved up are reminiscent of the ways in which the body is cut into pieces in images (especially the female body, which is not only cut up but also deemed to be ‘without organs’!)” (Lefebvre 355). Lefebvre, here, is giving us a direct nod towards Deleuze. Let us open up, a little bit for now, this connection between this space dominated world and the Deleuzian philosophy.

The “body without organs” is a concept developed by Deleuze and used in his two-volume collection, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The body without organs is another term for Deleuze’s understanding of the world as a plane of immanence, a plane in which bodies are in a state of perpetual becoming that is determined by the affective

encounters with other becoming bodies, or centers of indetermination, that occur on this plane/body without organs: “The body without organs is an egg: it is crisscrossed with axes and thresholds, with latitudes and longitudes and geodesic lines, traversed by *gradients* marking the transitions and the becomings, the destinations of the subject developing along these particular vectors” (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus* 19). Lefebvre’s indirect reference to the plane of immanence is now all the more interesting and relevant to my agenda. For when we take into consideration the contradiction that Lefebvre exposes between time and space through his spatial trialectic, we can see a body without organs, or a plane of immanence, in which space assaults time. Take, for example, the ways in which Lefebvre describes the contradiction between knowledge and power. The dual characteristic of space as simultaneously homogeneous and fragmented, or “intact” and “broken up” (Lefebvre 358), allows power to dominate knowledge by forcing the spatial layout into the position of upholding rules and policy, determining movement through signs, and routes, enforcing penalties through agents of the state, and creating barriers through Private Property and No Trespassing signs. In short, the spatial layout disrupts knowledge and freethinking through ideologies that disseminate power and make the general population live in a state of deception. Here, the dominated realm of representational space and time is perpetually under attack by a “repressive efficacy” that masks the ways in which space annihilates time: “Logic and logistics conceal its latent violence, which to be effective does not even have to show its hand” (Lefebvre 358). This is, in other words, a plane of immanence in which becoming is constantly barricaded by space.

We can now bring our conversation more directly back to the cinema. From here on out I want to explicitly carry Lefebvre's spatial trialectic into the cinema of late capitalism in order to further articulate the ways in which the spatial plane of immanence represses and annihilates time. For the spatial structure of this plane is exactly that which figures the contradiction between homogeneity and fragmentation. Connectivity persists throughout the entire plane of immanence, but the connectivity is determined by the contradictions of sectoral uneven development. Within the kaleidoscopic nature of late capitalism, spatial practice and representations of space work together to intensify, split, and repress representational space, which is to say the realm of time and affect.⁵³ To put it another way, when both the control of space and the practicality of space work together to create the schizophrenic nature of late capitalism, the lived body's relationship to his or her own milieu is one of stunted becoming and awareness, and an omnipresence of violence:

Lived space bears the stamp of the conflict between an inevitable, if long and difficult, maturation process and a failure to mature that leaves particular original resources and reserves untouched. It is in this space that the 'private' realm asserts itself, albeit more or less vigorously, and always in a conflictual way, against the public one.⁵⁴ (Lefebvre 362)

⁵³ Lefebvre speaks to this phenomenon when delineating the ways in which the consumption of space determines the function of time in stating, "Space is the envelope of time. When space is split, time is distanced – but it resists reduction. Within and through space, a certain social time is produced and reproduced; but real social time is forever re-emerging complete with its own characteristics and determinants: repetitions, rhythms, cycles, activities" (339).

⁵⁴ David Harvey describes this distinct phenomenon to postmodernity/late capitalism as an "overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds", and he goes on to state that, "As space appears to shrink to a 'global village' of telecommunications and a 'spaceship earth' of economic and ecological interdependencies – to use just two familiar and everyday images – and as time horizons shorten to the

This is the phenomenon of space fragmenting time and affect, a phenomenon that forces bodies into intense-searching situations.

3.3 *Blue Velvet as a Film that Pulverizes the Home*

Much has been written on *Blue Velvet* (Lynch) within the conversation of the ambiguous concept of postmodernism. In Fredric Jameson's seminal work on postmodernism, *Postmodernism: Or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, he turns to *Blue Velvet* as an example of, what he calls, 'Nostalgia Films,' films that corrode historicity and prevent us from understanding the present in relationship to the past by replacing the past with the pastiche: Stereotypes, clichés, and simulacrum of the past (19).⁵⁵ In short, these films are an assault on time as history, and Jameson sees *Blue Velvet* as one of these films because of its juxtaposition of clichéd images and stereotypes of the 1950s past with contemporary 1980s themes and settings (*Postmodernism* 296).⁵⁶ Timothy Corrigan's book on postmodernism and the cinema, *A Cinema Without Walls: Movies and Culture after Vietnam*, also associates the film with postmodernism by identifying its de-temporalizing features. For Corrigan, one of the film's most important qualities includes its assault on existential time through its unveiling of an empty subjective interiority. Corrigan's juxtaposition of *Blue Velvet* to Hitchcock is instructive,

point where the present is all there is (the world of the schizophrenic), so we have to learn how to cope with an overwhelming sense of *compression* of our spatial and temporal worlds" (240).

⁵⁵ Jameson defines 'Nostalgia Films' as follows: "Nostalgia films restructure the whole issue of pastiche and project it onto a collective and social level, where the desperate attempt to appropriate a missing past is now refracted through the iron law of fashion change and the emergent ideology of the generation" (19).

⁵⁶ Here is Jameson's summary of his argument concerning *Blue Velvet* (and Jonathan Demme's *Something Wild*): "Thus these films can be read as dual symptoms: they show a collective unconscious in the process of trying to identify its own present at the same time that they illuminate the failure of this attempt, which seems to reduce itself to the recombination of various stereotypes of the past" (*Postmodernism* 296).

Unlike a Hitchcock film, however, in these neighborhoods there is only one nature for Jeffery to discover, a horizontal rather than vertical “second nature” that flattens and evacuates all human and natural depths. In this contemporary version of a “second nature” (as opposed to Benjamin’s) there is no nostalgic yearning for a lost place or a hidden meaning (even the darker ones of Hitchcock). What the bland, semi-conscious Jeffery discovers is that he himself is a violently mechanical reproduction, a shimmering surface (like blue velvet) of a decaying environment. (72)

I mention these two readings of *Blue Velvet* in order to point to possible ways in which one can identify how the film works through a contingent relationship to time. Jameson is concerned with time as history and Corrigan is concerned with time as subjectivity. Neither of these readings align exactly with my method, but instead lie somewhere in the margins. The former is too broad and the latter is too narrow, but both analyses point us in the right direction by articulating time as that which is under attack. Where these analyses, in my opinion, fall short concerns their inability to dive into the specific ways in which space functions as the very force that pulverizes time. By bringing Lefebvre’s spatial trialectic into the analysis of *Blue Velvet*, we can delineate the specific ways in which an enveloping and homogeneous spatiality represses time into fissures of intensity.

We can begin moving *Blue Velvet* into the realms of the spatial trialectic and the spatial plane of immanence by noting the spatial structure of the film. The entire setting of *Blue Velvet* lies within the artificial city of Lumberton, a weird mixture of homey small-town Americana and terrifying miscreancy. The various facets of these two

contradictory atmospheres constitute the spatial practice of Lumberton, and they include: Middle-class suburban neighborhoods, the ominous slum-like “Deep River Apartments” building, the idyllic police station, mysterious warehouses, 1950s style high school and diner, sleazy night clubs, log yards and abandon fields, the local family-owned hardware store, and dilapidated low-class neighborhoods of drug dealing, kidnapping, and murder. The film works through a conscious understanding of its homogenous spatiality, as it takes great pains to emphasize its geographical features. Throughout the film, markers indicating place reoccur frequently. For example, when Jeffery, the film’s protagonist, goes to the police station for the first time we see multiple Lumberton city maps scattered throughout the *mise-en-scène* of the various shots that make up this scene. In one shot in particular, Jeffery and Detective Williams stand in the foreground, while one map of Lumberton occupies the midground of the *mise-en-scène*, and a different city map holds the background. It is no coincidence that such mapping of the city lies within a governmental agency, an agency that falls within the realm of representations of space, because it plays an active role in controlling and maintaining the spatial layout of the city. In addition to a prevalence of maps, the film also leans heavily on reoccurring “establishing shots” of geographical landmarks such as street signs, billboards, and signposts of local shops. Furthermore, embedded within the dialogue are references to the physical layout of the city. For example, before Jeffery leaves his house to “walk around the neighborhood”, his aunt asks him, “Jeffery, you’re not going down by Lincoln are you?”, and when Sandy is describing the details of the mysterious missing ear case to Jeffery, she says to him, “She lives in an apartment building that is real close your house.

It's also close to the field where you found the ear." All of this is to say that *Blue Velvet*'s spatial plane of immanence figures an airtight and homogenous spatial layout, and the film's relationship to this spatial layout is anything but passive, as the film willfully stresses the differing ways in which the homogeneous spatial practice of Lumberton envelopes the bodies residing in it through various formal devices such as the framing within the mise-en-scène, individual shot sequence of scenes, and even character dialogue. In doing so, the cinematographic concepts of *Blue Velvet* not only map the spatial practice of its plane of immanence, they also figure space as a controlling force, a process that allows spatial practice and representations of space to become the homogeneous and dominating forces on this plane of immanence. This becomes all the more obvious when we turn to the ways in which this single and ominous space macerates the temporal realm of representational space.

Blue Velvet is not a film that ignores or abandons time. Rather, it spends a significant amount of time figuring the ways in which space suppresses time and affect. The most emphatic means by which the film figures time as repressed is through turning the home and private dwelling into the loci of violence and intensity. The home is the temporal realm of the lived, of representational space, and it differs from the spatial layout and control of space in that within this spatial realm we have now moved into a passively experienced realm. We are, in other words, in a realm of being dominated by spatial practice and representations of space. Here, the cinematographic concepts are no longer ones of figuring the dominating qualities of space. Instead, the cinematographic concepts are now ones of figuring the dominated quality of time. Gone are the maps,

street signs, and directional references, and in its place are violent animals. This is, in short, the realm in which space fractures time and creates affection-images of pure intensity, affection-images without reflection.

Consider all of the different moments in which uncontrollable violence enters the home. We can take as our first example the opening scene of the film: A seminal American image of a man, Jeffery's Dad, standing outside his suburban home on a sunny weekend afternoon and watering his flowers. But then the water hose kinks, struggle ensues, the man grabs his neck, he has a stroke and collapses to the ground. Moments later, the camera then glides away from looking at the collapsed body and dives underground to conclude the scene with images of ravenous ants scavenging within their dirt home. Or take the first image of the interior of Jeffery's suburban home. Through a long shot, extreme low-angle, and low-key lighting, the first image that we get of Jeffery within his home is an ominous image of him completely covered in shadows and standing at the top of a staircase. Throughout the course of the film these images of subverting the oasis of the home continuously reappear and in doing so they become more intense. Within Dorothy's apartment (she resides within the mysterious and dilapidated Deep River Apartment building just off Lincoln St.) is where she holds a knife to Jeffery's neck, it is also where Frank rapes Dorothy, and where Jeffery taps into his most animalistic behaviors while engaging in sadistic intercourse with Dorothy. Within Ben's home (Ben is one of Frank's drug dealing partners) is where Frank is holding Dorothy's kidnapped son, here also is where Frank and his gang take Jeffery and assault him after abducting him, and it is where Frank's euphoric drug induced high morphs into ferocity

as at one point in the scene Frank becomes overwhelmed with a catharsis of emotions while listening to Roy Orbison's "In Dreams" and then seconds later he switches the music off and transforms into a savage who screams for sex. Moving back into the more affluent parts of Lumberton, at one point within Jeffery's home he threatens his aunt, and Jeffery's house is where Dorothy, naked and beaten, stumbles to in the middle of the night.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Dorothy's intrusive presence into American suburbia also enters into Sandy's (Jeffery's high school sweetheart) home, as this is where Dorothy's blood covered naked body most emphatically subverts the naïve infatuations that Sandy and Jeffery share.

The climactic sequence of the film is key. Within this sequence we have our most acute figuration of repressed time, as, here, bodies morph into the searching and fleeing creatures that are so crucial to this spatial plane of immanence. Throughout the course of the film Jeffery is our searcher, as he takes it upon himself to solve the mystery of the missing ear case. His search takes him in and out of all the different facets of Lumberton's spatial layout, none of which are as important as Dorothy's apartment. Dorothy's apartment lives up to Lefebvre's definition of representational space as an "affective kernel or centre" (42). Its destitute and sparse atmosphere, combined with an ubiquity of pink – Pink carpet, pink walls, pink furniture, and pink drapes – exudes an affective aroma. The dominating spatial layers of spatial practice and representations of space have, in other words, pushed us down into this fissure of time. On this homogeneous spatial plane of immanence, this is where the affection-image lies. At the

⁵⁷ This is also why the film closes with a subverting image of a robin holding a bug inside its mouth outside Jeffery's kitchen window.

end of the film, Jeffery enters the apartment one last time in order to finally solve his mystery. When he first walks into the apartment he, and viewers alike, are immediately struck by a terrifying image of two bloodied corpses in the middle of the living room. After collecting himself Jeffery then decides to leave and let the police finish solving the case, but upon attempting to exit he realizes that Frank is on his way up to the apartment and Jeffery then has no choice but to flee back inside and hide like a mouse hiding from a cat. A game of hide and seek ensues within this apartment covered in pink and blood. Before Frank enters the apartment Jeffery tries to hide in the back bedroom, but then quickly changes his mind and scrambles into the living room closet. Frank enters and runs down the hall towards the bedroom with his gun ablaze while verbally taunting his prey. He then starts firing aimlessly into the back bedroom. Now even angrier because he has yet to kill Jeffery, he runs back into the living room while screaming, “What the fuck. Where are you? Where are you?”. He shoots more random objects and peeks into the kitchen all the while Jeffery watches from the narrow slits in the closet door. Frank slowly approaches the closet. Jeffery then fires his gun and kills the hunter. On the spatial plane of immanence, the private dwelling can only assert itself against the public one through violence and intensity.

3.4 *Dark City and the Search for Time*

Alex Proyas' *Dark City* is something of a more literal articulation of space's manipulation and control of time. The science fiction film about a dying alien species known as Strangers whom abduct humans from earth and take them to an outer world

where they conduct experiments on them in order to discover the essence of the human soul and then hopefully find a cure to their own oncoming extinction is, firstly, a film of bodies searching through a milieu in which the temporal realm of representational spaces has all but been eliminated. This is, in other words, a film that is searching for time. Nearly all of the bodies that constitute *Dark City*'s plane of immanence are searching bodies: John, the film's protagonist, is searching for his past and Shell Beach, Inspector Bumstead, Dr. Schreber, and Emma are all searching for John, Eddie is searching for answers, and the Strangers are searching for a cure. All of these searches take place within the homogenous maze that is Dark City. Near the beginning of the film, Dr. Schreber stands over a large maze and watches mice attempt to maneuver their way through the convoluted structure, a structure that he describes to Emma as, "A rather crude experiment." Such is the condition of this spatial plane of immanence. It is a crude experiment in which time is under siege and bodies are reduced to searching mice.

The structure of this maze-city is one that severely lacks hodological connections. In fact, connectivity itself is not even a relevant term to this milieu. For as we learn throughout the film, the Strangers control the spatial layout of the city and when they put the humans into a trance like sleep every night they revise and modify the city's spatial practice. Thus whenever John asks a fellow pedestrian for directions to Shell Beach, the pedestrians are never able to articulate the route to the location. Moreover, rapid-fire short-takes and heavy doses of low-key lighting throughout further contribute to turning space into an arduous and discombobulated entity, a kaleidoscopic spatiality in which movement is constantly obstructed by space. Take, for example, one of the scenes in

which John flees throughout the city in order to escape the Strangers. The chase begins with him jumping across moving rooftops that rise and fall at the control of the Strangers' minds. A rising building that shoots up from the ground knocks John into the air. He breaks his fall by grabbing onto a fire escape. Another tall building then slides into the fire escape, nearly squishing John but he escapes again by breaking through a window and entering into an apartment building. The chase continues in an alley. John is cornered, but he spots a door with an exit sign over it. He flings the door open but on the other side is nothing except empty space, a giant free fall. He leaps into the air and grabs onto a rising chimney, which then takes him to another rooftop. He scrambles down to the ground level where the pursuit ends on a busy street. The true salience of *Dark City*, however, does not concern this spatial plane of immanence's figuration of obstructed movement. Rather, it concerns the plane's figuration of a contradiction between time and space.

The plane of immanence of *Dark City* is exactly that which figures a contradiction between time and space. Turning to Lefebvre's spatial trialectic and reading it directly alongside Deleuze's own interpretation of coexisting temporalities will allow us to, first, further articulate this distinguishing feature of this plane of immanence of late capitalism, and, second, more firmly fuse these two different philosophies (Lefebvre and Deleuze) onto the cinema. Prevalent throughout *Dark City* are images of spirals. We can interpret the spiral in two ways. On the one hand, it is a representation for the maze that is the city in which bodies exist – this is a spatial spiral. On the other hand, the spiral can be understood as an ironic symbol referring to that which is missing in the city. The spiral

represents a longing for time, a longing for the past. In *Cinema 2* Deleuze uses the figure of the spiral to delineate time as something multiple and coexistent: “The dividing in two, the differentiation of two images, actual and virtual, does not go to the limit, because the resulting circuit repeatedly takes us back from one kind to the other. There is only a vertigo, an oscillation” (84). For Deleuze, the spiral is that which shows that past and present move simultaneously. In fact, the present is overwhelmed and enveloped by the past. This is a crucial feature of the temporal plane of immanence. In delineating the role of time in the time-image regime, Deleuze relies heavily on Henri-Louis Bergson’s understanding of time as a non-chronological and coexistent interaction between the past and present, a phenomenon in which the past never disappears, but instead always moves with and ensconces the present (C2 82).⁵⁸ Deleuze describes the realm of the past as the realm of subjectivity, the realm of the virtual, the realm of affect:

Subjectivity is never ours, it is time, that is, the soul or the spirit, the virtual. The actual is always objective, but the virtual is subjective: it was initially the affect, that which we experience in time; then time itself, pure virtuality which divides itself in two as affecter and affected, ‘the affection of self by self’ as definition of time. (C2 82-83)

On the temporal plane of immanence the affection-image holds a central position because of this nature of coexisting temporalities, a phenomenon in which time moves through space and eliminates all homogeneity.

⁵⁸ Deleuze summarizes Bergson’s theories on time as follows, “Bergson’s major theses on time are as follows: the past coexists with the present that it has been; the past is preserved in itself, as past in general (non-chronological); at each moment time splits itself into present and past, present that passes and past which is preserved” (C2 82).

In *Dark City*, however, there is no past. Throughout the film we learn that one of the main reasons why the Strangers are able to change the spatial layout of the city every night is because once they put the humans to sleep they erase their memories. Thus the humans who occupy this city are humans without a past, or even future. These are schizophrenic humans of the perpetual present and none is as telling as the Eddie character. Eddie is this spatial plane of immanence's most emphatic figuration of an affection-image that has been fractured by space and split into images of pure intensity. Eddie is, in other words, an intense-searcher suffering from a lack of time. We first meet Eddie inside his shack-like home turned into a decrepit dwelling of psychotic obsessions. Eddie is a former police detective who has become obsessed with the idea that something within the world he lives is not right. He has begun to realize that he lacks a past, as he tells inspector Bumstead, "I've been trying to remember things, clearly remember things from my past. But the more I try to think back, the more it all starts to unravel." His life has now become one of trying to solve this mystery. This is Eddie's search for time and it is a search that has turned him into a violent animal who scares his wife, screams irrationally, and throws boots at bugs that reside in his din with him. The walls of his home serve as giant notepads in which he scribbles words, erratically sketches his fears and obsessions, and draws large spirals. On this plane of immanence, space has all but erased the temporal spiral. It has removed it from the realm of figuration and demoted it to a sad relic in the background. Here coexisting temporalities have disappeared, the perpetual present has replaced a past that moves with and envelops the present, affect has lost its two sides of reflection and intensity by becoming fractured into affection-images

of pure intensity: Violent obsessions and, eventually, suicide. As Eddie tells John just before he takes his own life, “There’s no way out, you know. You can’t get out of the city, believe me I’ve tried . . . But that’s okay. I figured a way out.” On this homogeneous plane of immanence, the only thing that moves with the present is space. This is a schizophrenic spatiality, a spatiality that attacks time and becoming through intensity. Here the past, the virtual, time, and affect are no longer that which overwhelms and envelops the present. The spatial plane of immanence of late capitalism brings space into this realm of totality. Now, it is space that swallows and envelops time. A schizophrenic spatiality is, in other words, a spatiality in which spatial practice and representations of space overwhelm and overpower the temporal realm of representational space.

The Strangers control space and time, or, to put it another way, the Strangers use space to annihilate time. Just before taking his own life Eddie tells John that the Strangers change things when the humans go to sleep. This is not only when the aliens erase humans’ memories. It is also when they most emphatically figure their relationship to the city as one of representations of space by modifying and revising the city’s spatial layout. As previously mentioned, Lefebvre defines representations of space as, “conceptualized space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artists with a scientific bent...” (38). The Strangers are all of these different professions that contribute to controlling space, as their use of space is purely scientific, space as thought and conceived, rather than lived. Lefebvre tells us that in prioritizing the conceived over the lived we run the risk of destroying life: “Like all social practice, spatial practice is lived directly before it is conceptualized; but the

speculative primacy of the conceived over the lived causes practice to disappear along with life..." (34). The Strangers experiments on humans are exactly that which destroy the temporal realm of life through conceived space. Take, for example, the film's most literal articulation of this process. It begins in the Strangers' underground liar where a giant clock holding the background becomes the dominant image of this *mise-en-scène*. The clock strikes twelve midnight and then we cut to a multitude of images of humans sleeping in the city. Time is now dead. The clock stops ticking and in its place space comes to life: Staircases expand, structures merge into each other, streets are redirected, giant buildings shoot into the sky, while others shrink to the ground. In the midst of all this we cut back to the Strangers' meditating in their dungeon as they continue to use their minds to manipulate the city's spatial practice. Once they finish revising the spatiality of the city and the buildings and streets are firmly set in their new locales, the clock begins moving again and the humans wake up. This is the act of space burying and swallowing time, physical-spatial structures replacing past memories. Instead of a spiral of coexisting temporalities, this plane of immanence is more like an enclosed ring crammed full with all the different facets of spatial practice and representations of space, as one of the Strangers tells John when describing the control they hold over the city, "There's no escape. The city's ours. We made it. ... We fashioned this city on stolen memories. Different eras, different pasts, all rolled into one." And this is why all of the bodies on this plane of immanence are thrown into intense-searching situations.

These searching bodies are searching for time, affect, representational space. Throughout majority of the film this realm is either buried underground or forced into the

cracks of decrepit homes of psychotic obsessions: The space of the Stranger's underground liar where time ticks and the Strangers reflect and meditate, or the space of Eddie's decaying and violent home. But there is one other place in which this temporal realm can be found on *Dark City*'s spatial plane of immanence. Throughout majority of the film, this realm is only spoken of and not seen or found. It is a wish, a longing for something instinctively desired, but at the same time forgotten.

Throughout the entire film, even with an erased memory, John is instinctively searching for Shell Beach, the place where, we are told, he would enjoy "running along the waves as a child." Thus the beach or the sea or the water is the Deleuzian realm of the past and the virtual. It is something like a memory, a thought, a realm of time that is always with John and is separate from the city's dominating spatiality. Water and the beach is also the Lefebvrian sphere of freedom. Lefebvre tells us that the beach may be one of the last places left that is free from the constraints of spatial practice and representations of space, a place where the body is able to realize its full potential without being obstructed by the routine and dominating qualities of space as perceived and conceived:

The beach is the only place of enjoyment that the human species has discovered in nature. Thanks to its sensory organs, from the sense of smell and from sexuality to sight (without any special emphasis being placed on the visual sphere), the body tends to behave as a *differential field*. It behaves, in other words, as a *total* body, breaking out of the temporal and spatial shell developed in response to labour, to the division of labour, to

the localizing of work and the specialization of places. In its tendency, the body asserts itself more (and better) as 'subject' and as 'object' than as 'subjectivity' (in the classical philosophical sense) and as 'objectivity' (fragmented in every way, distorted by the visual, by images, etc.). (384)

The beach, the ocean, water is a solace for the lived, time, and affect. On *Dark City*'s plane of immanence perceived and conceived space violently suppresses this realm of affect. Throughout nearly the entire film, these dominating spatial realms keep affect hidden, contained, and trapped in indoor pools, in bathtubs, in manufactured rivers and urban canals, on billboards and drawings, and in pipes and tunnels, conceived space ensconcing time. That is until John overthrows the Strangers at the end of the film, and in doing so this plane of immanence experiences a glorious rupture in its contradiction between time and space. In the film's closing sequence, time, the virtual, affect, representational space overthrows spatial practice and representations of space. Some of the final images of the film are images of massive streams of never ending water bursting out of tunnels and pipes and pouring over the entire plane. Here, a giant body of water is now that which surrounds the ring-city and thus turns this dark metropolis into a brightly light island where representational space is omnipresent, time enveloping space.

Conclusion

Gilles Deleuze and Henri Lefebvre share a common admiration for water, the sea, the beach. They both see it as a place where time and movement are free from the constraints of space as perceived and conceived. Here, the body's relationship to space is one of euphorically experiencing, living, and becoming in the world, or on the plane of immanence. Lefebvre shows that within this unique realm the body breaks away from the spheres of labour: "The beach is the only space of enjoyment that the human species has discovered in nature. Thanks to its sensory organs . . . the body tends to behave as *differential field*. It behaves, in other words, as a *total* body, breaking out of the temporal and spatial shell developed in response to labour..." (384). Deleuze echoes a similar line of thought, particularly with regards to the movement-image regime. Here, the philosopher contrasts the freedom of the sea against the constraints of land by understanding the sea as the ultimate figuration of movement, movement in-itself (*CI* 77).⁵⁹ This is a utopian space of "class solidarity," free labour, and affect: "It is in this sense that occupations connected with the sea are not a relic or an insular type of folklore: they are the horizon of all occupations... (Deleuze, *CI* 78).⁶⁰ Here movement is not governed by production or distribution and destinations, representations of space and

⁵⁹ Here, we can turn to Deleuze's delineation of the French impressionist's strong predilection of water: "Why does water seem to correspond to all the requirements of this French school: abstract aesthetic requirement, social documentary requirement, narrative dramatic requirement? It is firstly because water is the most perfect environment in which movement can be extracted from the thing moved, or mobility from movement itself" (*CI* 77).

⁶⁰ In a separate sentence Deleuze articulates the ways in which movement on water, or the "liquid abstract", differs from movement on land in stating, "The drama was that it was necessary to break the links with the earth, of father with son, husband with wife and mistress, woman with lover, children with parents; to retreat into solitude to achieve human solidarity, class solidarity" (*CI* 78).

spatial practice. Instead, this is a plane of immanence in which the journey is separate from the destination, a plane of immanence in which becoming flourishes.⁶¹

In the time-image regime the sea plays a crucial role in figuring the fragmented world of the any-space-whatever. Here the body of the ship and the body of the sea coexists with each other as “the seed and the environment,” “the limpid and the opaque,” and “the actual and the virtual” (Deleuze, *C2* 71).⁶² The coexistence of these two heterogeneous bodies allows affect in its two poles of reflection and intensity to flourish. This is a plane of immanence in which bodies move through time, and not space. Here, it is the past that moves with and envelops the present; a ship perpetually moving through a sea of time.

With Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Verena Paravel’s 2012 film *Leviathan*, we have a third figuration of water that captures the function of this, once mysterious, realm in late capitalism. The documentary of a contemporary North American industrial fishing ship at sea turns the space of the sea into a dominating and ominous space. Here, it is no longer time, the past, the virtual, affect that the ship moves with. Rather, the sea has now become a realm of space as perceived and conceived. It is spatial practice and representations of space that moves with and swallows the ship on this homogeneous and contradictory plane of immanence. The ship has now been demoted to a searcher as its

⁶¹ Deleuze differentiates the kind of movement that occurs on land from the kind of movement on water in stating, “And on land, movement always takes place from one point to another, always between two points, while on water the point is always between two movements: it thus marks the conversion or the inversion of movement, as in a hydraulic relationship of a dive and counter-dive, which is found in the movement of the camera itself (the final fall of the entwined bodies of the two lovers has no end, but is converted into an ascending movement)” (*CI* 79).

⁶² These terms are the terms Deleuze uses to describe the coexistence of temporality within the crystalline structure of the time-image’s plane of immanence: “Exchange or indiscernibility thus follow each other in three ways in the crystalline circuit: the actual and the virtual (or the two mirrors face to face); the limpid and the opaque; the seed and the environment” (*C2* 71).

movements are determined by its destination, by production and distribution. This is, in other words, an intense pursuit for surplus-profit.

In its evolution from a temporal body to a spatial body the sea has become violent. On this spatial plane of immanence, the commercial ship does not glide effortlessly through the water. Rather, it battles the water. In this fight with space, the handheld camera cannot hold a stable frame. It repeatedly jerks horizontally across the formless frame, it shakes uncontrollably, it loses the ability to focus, muffles sound, and creates obscure and violent images. Throughout the film, the sea grabs the camera and pulls it down into its dark depths, and throws it back into the night sky where upon landing it then grabs it again and pulls it underwater, thus forcing the camera to lose its bearings. At different moments throughout the film, the sea flips the camera upside down, a phenomenon that creates an indiscernible *mise-en-scène* where the sky sinks to lower half of the frame while the sea hangs in the upper half. Both sky and sea are dark as ink. They swallow the commercial ship, as at one point in the film we get a horrific overhead long-shot of the ship's deck ensconced by pure darkness. Furthermore, at multiple times throughout the film this omnipotent darkness, along with terrifying lines and obscure shapes of green, swallow the entire surface of screen itself, all homogeneity without hodological connections.

This is a schizophrenic spatiality, a plane of immanence in which spatial practice and representations of space attack time and becoming and create experiences of intensity. Gone is the figuration of the sea as the realm of time, the virtual, affect. The temporal sea is extinct. It has been demoted to nostalgic relics that exist as tattoos on the

labourers arms and shoulders. Space has pulverized the temporal realm of affect into actions of pure intensity: Ferocious movements, violence, blood, and flesh. For hours on end the tired bodies on the ship yank and tug heavy chains, ropes, and nets out of the water, scavenger through shells and debris from the water, and monotonously slaughter, gut, decapitate, and butcher the creatures of the sea. In globalization, the sea is no longer different from the land. It has become an extension of spatial practice and representations of space. The only fragments that exist on the plane of immanence of late capitalism consist of space's fragmentation of time itself.

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